

Justice W. Loring
THE
HISTORY
OF THE
DESTRUCTION
OF THE
HELVETIC UNION
AND
LIBERTY:

BY
J. MALLET DU PAN.

"Its situation (Switzerland's) is correctly and energetically drawn in the picture of *Athens*, left us by a writer of the middle ages, after the invasion of *Alaric*, "*It is the empty and bloody skin of an immolated victim!*" she has nothing left but Rocks, Ruins and DEMAGOGUES." *Preface p. 5.*

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THE Frontispiece is taken from a book entitled Emblemata Politica, published in the year 1618, and in the possession of a Gentleman in this town. The following lines accompany the Plate in the original : to the reader of these pages, or to any intelligent observer of events, it is unnecessary to observe, how pertinently both the Emblem and the inscription are applicable to the terrible Republic.

UNGUE RAPAX, & dente ferox Panthera, ferarum
Carne truces spirat non saturata minas.
Sæva Tyrannorum mens, non explebilis auro,
Sanguine, cæde, bonis ; sic magis usque fitit.
—— latebras petit, abstrusosque recessus ;
Et quodcunque facit, fraude doloque facit,
Insidiis donec propriis, ac nexibus ultro
In pœnas, JOVE-Vindice, victa ruat.



I give notice to a class of men tremblingly alive to their own woes, exceedingly indifferent to those of others, and who would forgive the French Republic the desolation of the globe, provided they were spared themselves, that they will no where find in this work what they are pleased to call moderation. Let them preach that to the oppressors, not to the victims. It is enough for me to adhere to the strict impartiality due to historic truth.

With Switzerland I have lost a country, relations, and friends : of these, all I have left is a painful remembrance.

LONDON, August 20, 1798.

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P R E F A C E.

THE view of the calamities and errors of Switzerland is, perhaps, the most instructive to be drawn from the history of the times: and I offer some sketches of it, as a proper introduction to the more general surveys which we are about to take of the events of this epocha. In the Helvetic History, every Government may read its own destiny, and learn its duty. If there be yet one that flatters itself that its existence is reconcileable with that of the French Republic, let it study this dreadful monument of their friendship.

Here every man may see how much weight treaties, alliances, benefactions, rights of neutrality, and even submission itself, retain in the scales of that Directory, who hunt justice from the earth, and whose sanguinary rapacity seeks plunder and spreads ruin alike on the Nile as on the Rhine, in Republican Congresses as well as in the heart of Monarchies.

Every man who is possessed of property will find what confidence is to be placed in these Revolutions, this improvement, these constitutions, and this liberty, lately forced upon Nations by insatiable ravishers, whose domination overwhelms the rich, those who enjoy a happy medi-

ocrity, the labouring poor, pardons inequality of no kind, and shews respect to crimes alone.

It was in the arms of security, in the midst of an admirable social order, that a country resplendent with wisdom and happiness was abruptly ingulfed in a deluge of misfortunes. I know of no scourge which France has not heaped upon it, no species of depravation which its regenerators have not introduced into it, no stain with which they have not polluted its honourable existence.

Yet, what people had more claims to favour from the French Directory than the Swiss? What people had a right to depend upon more sacrifices? Let them reflect upon the result of five years of patience, condescension, and hope! Let them reflect upon what are now the consequences of striving to avert war!

Let Governments and Nations cease then to expect safety from the counsels of servile policy: let them assure themselves that whenever the Revolutionary Association of Paris attempts to dishonour them, it means also to conquer them. Providence has not allied peace to the intermission of courage, nor safety to terror. When are we to neglect riches and life itself, if it be not when barbarians invade our houses, our altars, our fields, and our families? To what purpose should we suffer ourselves to be subjugated, robbed, and ruled by imperious laws?

Nations and their Governments are condemned at the Tribunal of the Revolution: the mis-

ery of the one is inseparable from the fall of the other. He must be blind who can now think that fortune, safety, enjoyments, are to be secured by an overthrow of established institutions. The whole race are implicated in the decrees of a despotism which can neither be softened nor explained.

Switzerland now mourns for having neglected this truth : Its situation is correctly and energetically drawn in the picture of Athens, left us by a writer of the middle ages, after the invasion of Alaric—"It is the empty and bloody skin of an immolated victim!" she has nothing left but ROCKS, RUINS, and DEMAGOGUES.

I have faithfully traced the errors of its administrations, and the source of its misfortunes ; but it deserves pity much more than reproach ; for its faults were the faults of individuals, while the Nation itself possesses great virtues.

Many mistakes still creep into the opinion which strangers form of this event. It is very erroneously believed that the majority of the Swiss concurred in the Revolution. The public will see, on the contrary, that a repugnance to those woful innovations, and a zealoufness to prevent their encroachments, were never more general.

Nor is it less falsely inferred, from the readiness with which the French reduced the country, that it was not in a state to defend itself, and that all resistance would have been fruitless. These prejudices, it is hoped, will be laid aside

on a view of the crosses, perplexities, divisions, and of the causes of all these, which palsied the springs of national valour.

It was not the Helvetic Body that fought: the army of the Canton of Berne, deserted by the others, kept alone the field: and, mutilated as was this force, never would the enemy have triumphed over it without the aid of revolutionary perfidies, and had they not disorganized the Confederacy and its councils.

That the reader may understand the motives and consequences of this oppression, I have given a moral and political view of Switzerland, previous to the crisis when the Apostles of French liberty went and said to the inhabitants, Die, or renounce your happiness; take our laws, or have your throats cut. It is a description of what no longer exists: my tears have often fallen on my paper as I wrote it. I beg some indulgence for the length of the narrative, which grew under my pen in spite of me, as a flattering dream, the remembrance of which we endeavour to prolong.

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Travellers and writers, who have spoken of the civil government of Switzerland, seem only to have dwelt upon the exterior form and theory of its different jurisdictions; but the spirit of each, their maxims, the administration and its effects, have escaped their notice. Knowledge of this kind requires long continuance in a place, and repeated observations.

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HEU PIETAS, HEU PRISCA FIDES, INVICTAQUE BELLO
DEXTERA ! VIRG.

OF the numberless miseries on which the glory of the French Republic is built, none afforded less pretence, or was less probable, than the destruction of the Helvetic Confederacy by violence.

Those States, united for their common preservation, consisted of twenty Republics forming one general Republic; and notwithstanding the defect of a collective body without sovereignty, experience promised it duration, for the imperfection of the federal union was counterbalanced by great advantages. If it enfeebled subordination

in these aggregate communities, it also left them, with independence, the invaluable privilege of obeying their own laws, and of being governed by their immediate fellow-citizens. The stipulations of the compact, which had been suggested by natural and local considerations, were, that they should be mutually guarantees of that independence, possess sovereignty within themselves, and become subjects of the Union whenever any of them was threatened with danger.

The relations and duties of this defensive League were settled by simple agreement, and their sanction was ratified by time and self-interest. No treacherous chimera of an *indivisible* Republic ever entered the minds of these sensible people. Nature and fortune had made them unequal in territory, in political liberty, manners and origin : they respected nature and the work of ages. The Helvetic Association existed like its mountains, by the gradual coherence of the parts, the elements of which were cemented by the weight of time.

It had surmounted the dangers that encompassed its cradle, escaped through the storms of its second era, the crisis of jealousies, the flame of civil wars and the flood of external ones, the tumult of popular senates, the corruption of foreign courts, and that more to be dreaded of victory : neither the vicissitudes of European Politics, nor the schism of the Reformation

which divided Switzerland, nor the false zeal that armed its inhabitants, had ever dissolved that alliance, which had been for a moment disturbed.

Kings respected it ; its Civil Government was settled ; Foreign Powers courted its friendship ; the deference paid to its Councils equalled the esteem gained by the valour of its Soldiers. No one longer thought of attacking it ; it quarrelled with no one. Circumscribed by its situation, its politics became stable, and free from errors. This pacific Confederacy was guided, to such a degree, by the rule of principles, that surer preserver than gold or arms, that the alarm-bell of the French Revolution could not shake its habits : it forgot to reckon itself among the victims marked out ; that eruption appeared but a local disturbance, and when it had kindled an eternal war in the world, Switzerland unmoved flattered itself that it should remain unhurt amid the wrecks of Social Policy, surrounded by the torches of *Philosophy*, the brands of Revolutionary Fanaticism, and the crimes of those by whom they were guided.

This was a frightful state of security, of which it will be curious to trace the causes, and survey the effects.

Their eyes were opened by an Ally with whom they had been in amity for five hundred years. After overturning the most ancient Monarchy, and the most an-

cient Republic,* the new chiefs of France fell upon Switzerland behind its rocks. Aggression was never founded upon more criminal motives, nor executed with greater atrocity. While the Directory were entangled in a war in Germany, the Helvetic Cantons were their *good neighbours and dear allies*: but no sooner had the treaty of *Campo-Formio* fet their politics and their armies at liberty, than they threw off the mask, and fixed their ban on Switzerland. One is at a loss which to wonder at most, the credit their deceptions obtained, or the difference of opinions that arose when their designs were no longer doubtful.

Here we see audacity struggling with irresolution, knavery with inexperience, and habitual effrontery with trembling apprehension. The noble ardour of the people, and of some intrepid magistrates, had not power to make its way to the floating Councils, which, become inaccessible to the national enthusiasm, were suffering the sacred flame of their ancestors to expire, and, amid the monuments of triumphant liberty, were decreeing the yoke to their Country while they thought they were decreeing their own personal safety.

They exemplified that want of foresight which leaves States to the mercy of unexpected events. When nothing has been foreseen, the hour of danger throws all into

* Venice.

confusion : weak minds make it a plea for cowardice, traitors increase the disorder, and destruction ensues in the chaos.

Thus perished Switzerland in full vigour : but its ruin was owing less to the arms of its enemies than to their intrigues, which gained admission among the divided Governments ; and to the fatal mistake which, at the moment when a union of power was most necessary, transformed the Senates, already too numerous, into a Popular Assembly, and introduced anarchy into the State and into the Army. This suicide of the Governments was perpetrated by means of mock negotiations with an impostor* stained with the blood of his countrymen,—a general without talents, a promoter of the Revolution without faith, a missionary of dissension, knavery, and corruption, sent to fight where there was confusion, and to conquer where there was no peril.

Passing from the view of these errors, we turn with horror to that of the outrages which produced, and the disgraces which followed them.

Five Usurpers seated on the throne of *Henry IV.* issued the mandate ; and those happy skies were to be deformed with clouds and tempests. In eight days the Satellites of the Directory overturned the work of five centuries.

* General Brune.

In their absurd accusations, they contradict history, the testimony of the senses, the general voice. Those paternal governments, that domestic regency, that sacred connexion between the people and their magistrates, became, under the pen of rhetorical plunderers, metamorphosed into associations of slaves and oppressors.

Furious in victory, they torture their prey before they devour it. Those rustic retreats, the abodes of order, of industry, and of morals, are delivered up to the brutality of foreign soldiers ; those fields, fertilized by freemen under the protection of tutelary laws, are overflowed with the blood of their cultivators. No pity, no remorse, no respect for age or sex ; whoever escapes the murderer, escapes but to be plundered and disgraced. No asylum for innocence, modesty, and decency. The victors sell humanity for money, then they violate their contracts. They sow distrust and discord among the vanquished, command assassinations, and the generals and other officers are made to fall beneath the weapons of their own misguided soldiery.

The towns are thrown open ; and rapine enters with the French. These *avengers* of the people place those whom they are to avenge under martial law between their bayonets and their rapacity. Public monies, funds for aids, domestic savings, deposits, national treasure, arsenals, magazines, all

is swept from this nation, now for the first time disarmed, and disarmed under colour of the *Rights of Man*.

A worse shame still follows : in exchange for its hereditary laws, its prosperity, and its money, Switzerland is to receive, from the Directory, *institutions*. The plunderers assume the garb of legislators. In the midst of their orgies, they set themselves up for teachers of morality and republican liberty ; to the country, in which they are spreading desolation and ruin, they dictate rules adapted to perpetuate its servitude and its calamities. A *constitution* arrives from Paris, as the Alcoran was brought from Heaven ; the Helvetic body takes a new form, as a ball of clay in the hands of the potter. All examination, all animadversion, all modification, is strictly prohibited ; this code, conveyed by soldiers, and puffed by mercenary scoundrels, is to be received and understood by inspiration. Immediately a parcel of dupes, ambitious fools, and traitors, erect themselves into a *Legislative Body* : the conceit of a *Directory* is added to that of a representative assembly, a court for enrolling French dictators and generals.

Every Swiss who has defended his country, and who mourns for it, becomes criminal : to escape chastisement, it is not enough to have been insensible to the danger of the State, he must have joined in betraying it. Whoever hesitates to receive the laws

of these sanguinary foreigners, is guilty of *rebellion*. To the very fire-sides of the first heroes of Helvetic liberty are their posterity pursued, except where the despair of the inhabitants has blocked up the entrance of those asylums with dead bodies.

This is the *fraternity* of French republicans towards independent nations ! Though, for a while, these destructive tyrants feigned to pardon kings, free states could find no favour from their despotism ; it is for free states that they now reserve their schemes of extermination ; and the spirit which has just entombed the Helvetic liberty, and enslaved Geneva, Bienne, and Mulhausen, will never be at rest while Britain preserves her constitution, and the United States of America support their laws.

And what provocation has dictated this horrible policy ? How has this atheistical Republic, who, in her declamatory fictions, justified her hostilities against kings by the necessity of defending the independence of her form of government, dared, unsolicited and unauthorized, to interpose as judge between blameless sovereigns and happy nations, to invent an imaginary cause in order to assume to herself the right of deciding it sword in hand, and then to treat as a conquered territory that country which she boasted her intentions of *setting free* ?

No power was more inoffensive : by their neutrality the eastern provinces of France

had been covered : every concession exacted by this imperious neighbour had been made. Who called her in ? Neither before nor since the invasion did the Helvetic nation complain of their governments. Every mouth was free to proclaim their grievances, or call for a revolution ; none opened but to renew the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Even that feeble assemblage of two hundred madmen of the *Pays de Vaud*, whose delirium had wandered from the national reason, opposed the revolution of France and her military intervention. Surely, some obscure exiles, as unworthy the name of Swiss as of the attention of any government, however immoral, did not represent two million of citizens, who were swearing before their magistrates to save their country or die. What did the Directory attack ? A pure and enlightened administration, a harmony between the people and their chiefs, an admirable order, consolidated by experience and wisdom.

But the more unprovoked the aggression, the more horrid was its nature, and the more disastrous its consequences : thus it had been contrived by the viziers of Paris, who, of all the roads that lie open to their mischief, always prefer that which leads to the greatest miseries.

The following narrative will develop and prove the facts, the heads of which we have briefly stated ; but before we describe those

mournful scenes, let us recur to the circumstances which preceded them, and the theatre on which they were acted.

CHAP. I.

Moral and Civil State of Switzerland, particularly of the Canton of Berne, before and since the Revolution of France.

WHOEVER is acquainted with Switzerland only from books or short visits, can have taken but an imperfect survey of the civil government of that country, and particularly of the state of Berne.

To justify its constitutions, it were enough to say, that they deserved all the abuse with which the jurists of the Directory have endeavoured to vilify them. Inconsistent with the dogmas of the Revolution, they were fortunately so with its effects. To end all dispute, we have only to compare a continued succession of crime, violence, injustice, torture, war, hatred, tyranny, revolt, and change, which for nine years past has composed the Annals of France, with a continued succession of customs respected by the governing and the governed, invariable laws protected by the people and their magistrates, free obedience and power supported by confidence, har-

mony and justice, contentment and safety, which has been handed from generation to generation by the Helvetic governments.

If we thus reduce the dispute to a question of fact, we shall find that the present situation of France furnishes us with the best defence that can be made of those aristocracies. On a thorough investigation of this comparison, all reasoning becomes superfluous, and a just mind immediately draws the conclusion, that the Helvetic governments were good, were it only for their dissimilitude to the French government.

But if they are vindicated by a view of their effects, they are not less so by their analysis and the principles of their formation.

A political institution which owes its origin neither to violence nor fraud, which has usurped none of the primitive rights of the nation, against which neither the people nor any part of the people have complained, and which, in a country where the general will is not constrained either by military force, or illegal tribunals, has existed in vigour century after century, entirely supported by general consent, rests upon the most unobjectionable foundation, and deserves public respect. To make a handle of its abuses in order to stigmatize its nature, is a stale sophism. To make a handle of its faults in order to effect its destruction, is to devote

the government to a change every ten years ; for, whence shall we take a legislative system which in that interval may not become defective ?

Not one of the States of the Helvetic Body had, since its origin, varied from its nature. There was no difference in the people of Zurich, of Berne, of Appenzel, in 1798, and in the first days of their confederation. If there be an exception to this remark, it is in favour of political equality : the nobility had every where lost their original advantages ; the commoners had every where gained in number, influence, and power upon the *knights*.

Those communities, which had been annexed to the empire, composed rather of cities than of provinces, became sovereign by becoming independent : their municipal regulations were converted into a public constitution, and the corporation of the burghers of the city formed the Patrician Order and the Supreme Council.

By arms, by treaties, by purchases, and by grants, those growing States acquired new or enlarged their old territory. These accessions were all at the expense of several princes and great barons. It was by the valour and ability of its gentry and principal citizens, that Switzerland removed to Germany the feudal system and its oppressions. Those subjects of the different Cantons to whom the Parisian declaimers speak

of the *rights of their ancestors*, would sink again into vassals, if they were restored to their original condition. A hundred districts that had submitted to one of the Helvetic Bodies owed the liberty of their persons and security of their property to that government. The immunities enjoyed by any province before it was incorporated with one of the Cantons, were preserved and increased. Such as were slaves were made free; such as were free retained their privileges: this was throughout the spirit of the treaty, which, by force or right, was granted them by new sovereigns. It is a truth applicable as well to the *Pays de Vaud* as to every other province, notwithstanding the fables some have dared to hazard upon its ancient States.

Neither legislator nor constituent assembly composed these governments. They grew from the very nature of things, and from the morals of the inhabitants: their roots are to be found in the just and necessary influence of property, talents, and hereditary services.

Vallies, inclosed among the Alps and peopled with shepherds, preserved the simplest system as the most suitable to their condition. What wants, what interests, what relations, could have suggested to them any other system than that of democracy? More like neighbours in the infancy of society, those Alpine tribes, obedient to tra-

ditions and customs, were fond of no public authority except what was absolutely necessary for the execution of laws as circumscribed as the bounds of their abode.

In proportion to their extent, population, and successive combinations, other States adopted a form between an absolute popular government and pure aristocracy. In short, elsewhere, the double authority arising from family and property, that of the chief city or senates, prevailed over the intermediate forms. From some differences in the political order arose all the varieties pre-existing in the physical and moral order, both of which are the sports of modern constitution-makers.

If we pursue this inquiry, with the maps before us, we shall wonder at the ignorant presumption with which the terms *usurpation*, *tyranny*, *violation of natural rights*, have been employed on this occasion.

Let us take Berne for example. The Directory have been peculiarly lavish of their defamation and fury upon this Canton. The *crimes* of this State, from its origin to its overthrow, are these :

Berne, founded in the year 1191 by one of the great men* of the middle age, was an open asylum against the feudal tyranny. The gentry and farming proprietors, oppressed by the great vassals of the empire, became the first inhabitants and the first rulers of

* Berthold V. Duke of Zeringua.

it. It was to them and to their descendants that the town and Canton owed their independence, the victories which confirmed it, a territory acquired at the point of the sword, the abolition of general slavery,* the stability of the laws, whatever protected, civilized, or adorned the Republic.

Warriors, composing a defensive and military association, were its only governors: for ever round their colours to repel the invasion or conquer the countries of the enemy, the leaders of the army were the leaders of the State. No magistracy had a nobler or more legitimate source. To whom should the sovereignty have belonged, but to the original possessors, who paid for it with their blood, and to whom the community owed its existence?† The peasants and mechanics who fled to Berne, under the protection of those great citizens, never thought of aspiring to the aristocratic authority: from the origin of this government we find no trace in its annals of a different constitution, no complaints against its legality, nor commotions produced by any dispute upon ambiguous rights.

* In 1486 the Teutonic order, who had a commandery at Buchsée in the Canton, refused to enfranchise their villeins or vassals, Berne compelled them to do it, proscribing slavery as *against the spirit of Christianity*.

† The first of the family of the *Bubenbergs* who settled at Berne when the city was founded, peopled the half of it at his own expense. This illustrious house became extinct in the sixteenth century, after having given thirteen *Avoyers* (magistrates so titled) to the Republic.

The Supreme Council of Berne was established on the same account as the Parliaments of England, the Diets of Sweden, and the States-General of France. The Community, poor, newly formed, and threatened with danger, consigned the care of their defence and government to brave and generous Nobles ; men who supported their wars with their persons and fortunes, who paid for the dominions bought by the Republic, and more than once liquidated its debts, who often sold their estates to serve it upon embassies or in military commands, and who were the founders of all its public establishments.

This primitive Institution had been transmitted to us unimpaired. We see no interruption of this traditional consent of the Community to the hereditary representation of the public Sovereignty by a Supreme Council, taken from the families who were the founders of the city, and from those who afterwards shared their dangers, their services, and their glory.

In 1384, an excessive weight of influence preponderating in some noble houses, raised a storm. A General Assembly of the Commons removed some Magistrates ; but the forms of the government remained unaltered, and the People, discreet in the midst of the violent exercise of their interposition, resigned the reins of the State into the hands of their Patricians.

Aristocracies are usually contracted by time and abuses, degenerating into despotic Oligarchy. Here, on the contrary, the Sovereign Authority, exercised for two centuries and a half by a warlike Gentry, was extended to a greater number of families, distinguished by their merit, their property, and sacrifices made for their country. In a short time the Nobility were reduced to little more than an ornament: the seigneurial jurisdiction being limited, and exterior distinctions destroyed, all that the Nobles had left was the respect they received from their equals, their title to national gratitude, and a mere precedency in the Senate.

In Berne for a long time there had not been more than six ancient noble families, included in 150 families of Patricians and Commoners, allowed by the Constitution to sit in the Supreme Council. The number of those required for that Council had been fixed at seventy-six, to balance the preponderance of the numerous families. Towards the latter end of the Republic, eighty-one of them were admitted to the Supreme Assembly.

In like manner we observe the decline of the Aristocracy, in the decrees for supplying the places of families extinct, by new families from the towns or from the country, without any other qualification than those of property, priority, or personal for-

vices. More than one farmer had recently become a Burgher of Berne, and more than one of that judicious class of Yeomanry had also refused that distinction.

After this explanation, every one may estimate the charges of *Oligarchy* with which the Secretaries of the Directory have embellished their manifestoes. Five executive Magistrates in a Republic seizing upon all the powers placed by the law in different hands, and proscribing arbitrarily the Representatives, may be said to form an *Oligarchy*, and the most odious of all. The power of the Roman People, Senate, and Consuls, usurped by the Decemvirs; the Ephori assuming public authority, and putting the King of Lacædemon to death, are examples of Oligarchy—the corruption and not the principle of a regular Aristocracy.

That of Berne, settled by positive and immutable laws, it is true, was confined to the Capital; and for this reason, that the Capital and its Constitution were established before any acquisition of territory. Berne did not make subjects of the different people that passed under her dominion, she received them such from their lords or their sovereigns. The anterior privileges and customs of these incorporated districts were confirmed, and the greater part of them obtained additional ones. Not one of them ever thought of being entitled to further concessions, before the French bayonet-revolution.

Nevertheless, the Government, full of public confidence, frequently consulted the whole Community, both of the capital and of the country, upon questions of war, upon alliances to be formed, and upon extraordinary duties to be granted: but none of those Assemblies ever uttered a syllable against the nature of the Administration: those spontaneous Convocations were always marked with testimonies of submission and attachment. When, in 1440, Frederic IV. Archduke of Austria, challenged from Berne the four towns and province of Lower Argovia, those Communities were convened, and left to the free choice of their Sovereign: they unanimously offered their persons and properties to the Government of Berne against the Archduke. Their history is full of such instances, which prove a general attachment, and even enthusiasm, in the inhabitants, for the Political System of the State.

Those general Convocations, which had fallen into disuse from the non-existence of the circumstances that had made them necessary, were again recurred to on the approach of the French; and they heartily protested (as will be seen in the course of this work) against the inventions of those strange preceptors of the human race.

These preliminary considerations are perhaps superfluous. To shew the legitimacy of a Government, it is idle to turn over

its archives, while its titles are written on every heart, and are clear to every eye. Why dispute upon the theory of the Sovereignities, when their effects fall under the evidence of the senses? All the vagaries of political metaphysics are not worth one fact of experimental politics. Surely the consequences of oppression or of liberty are too plain not to be discerned by the most common observer, without studying the sentences of systematic preachers. To tell Nations who, from generation to generation, have prospered under a Constitution hallowed by their affection, that this voluntary acquiescence is an offence against *Philosophy*, that their daily judgment is a constant act of folly, and the consciousness of their happiness an illusion, is a degree of madness and arrogance unheard of among men, till it came from the Republican French.

The conduct and principles of the Government of Berne were correspondent to the end and nature of its creation. A sounder or steadier spirit is no where to be found. Equally removed from the harshness of the Mercantile Aristocracies, and the want of responsibility of the Democracies, the Administration formed ties which united Generals to their Companions in arms; on the part of the People, respect and confidence; in the Magistrates, firmness and generosity, power and goodness, paternal affection and candour. There, courage, he-

editary like the Patrician order, expelled suspicion. At Berne nothing was known of those institutions of vigilance and terror which Venice thought essential to her preservation ; nor of those exactions of a Sovereign Nobility, poor and selfish ; nor of those disorderly factions, which filled Rome, Genoa, and Florence, with proscriptions and rapine. Never did ambition, rivalry, or revenge, there shed blood. While the Government was unmolested, the People felt no uneasiness : in the course of six centuries scarcely two popular commotions arose, and not one in consequence of any infringement of the laws.

Such internal tranquillity between warlike Subjects, and a Magistracy without arms, is not to be accounted for by the Parisian Romances upon *Tyranny* and *Slavery*. It resulted from the stability of the laws, from the maxims of State which follow and supply their imperfection ; and, lastly, from the attention of the Sovereign Power to guard the tutelary principle of Aristocracy—*moderation*.

By these three anchors were secured the strength, duration, and prosperity of the Republic. No one thought of abandoning duties which long experience had settled by a sacred prescription ; no one desired innovations, while those in authority set no example of mutability. The Laws of Berne retained their energy, because they were

supported by the morality of the people, and because their execution seemed rather an act of domestic regulation, than the command of a Sovereign.

Although the supreme authorities were placed in the Great Council, the persons to whom they were entrusted could not exceed the limits of them, nor confound their prerogatives: a Constitution exactly marked out precluded all interference or encroachment. It was no more in the power of the Sovereign Council to prevent the execution of the laws, than in the power of the Senate to prevent their being decreed, or in the power of either to infringe upon the jurisdictions of the Courts of Justice. In theory this balance might have been incorrect; but authority is not divided as apartments are laid out. The most enormous of political extravagances is certainly that which we have seen the Assemblies of France attempt, in their ideal subdivisions of the public power; without considering that all power which did not exist before it was distributed, and which is dated from the day when it started from the brain of the Legislator, is a tree planted in the clouds. The organization of the Government of Berne grew from its original elements: what innovator would have been hardy enough to propose to new-model it entirely, and to trust to the chance of an

hypothesis, when ages of success ~~at those~~ mented the Constitution?

The People, it is true, did not elect Representatives; the Burghers of a City exercised dominion over a population of four hundred thousand souls. Whom shall we accuse for this? Shall it be the Nation, who, considering their magistrates as their Hereditary Representatives, had no idea, nor conceived the necessity, of having elective ones? Or shall it be the Magistrates, who, by never betraying their trust, had merited to be the guardians of their liberty?

Besides, every town and village, in the first instance, managed its own concerns and police, and elected its officers and judges of subordinate jurisdiction. It is not true that they were excluded from all power: independent of Berne, except in what related to the general legislation and polity, they were invested with power as magistrates, though not as Sovereigns.

As the central Government of those municipal and rural Corporations, Berne was their bond of general union, and their regulator: had her supremacy been lost, inevitable conflicts would have torn those Communities, whose languages, privileges, and wants, were different from the beginning. The guardian of their charters, the umpire of their disputes, the metropolis of those minor Republics, Berne was as a com-

moperty, where the seat of government was fixed by general consent.

A peace which had lasted for two centuries having rendered it unnecessary for the State to have recourse to contributions, the right of taxation had but a virtual existence. Had it become requisite to exercise it, no doubt the Government would, as formerly, have called upon the Communities for the necessary subsidies. But in what manner did it prevent the necessity of extraordinary resources? By an administration of the finances, the spirit of which cannot be too well known.

The Revenue arose from the public demesnes, the feudal rents, the interest of savings placed in foreign funds, some duties or tolls laid upon certain imported merchandize (the produce of which was appropriated to making and repairing the finest roads,) and the disposal of the salt from the State-mines, or bought from foreigners and sold again at the moderate rate of a penny farthing* a pound. There was no tax upon faculty, no poll-tax, no land-tax, if we except the ecclesiastical tithes, which in no Christian country besides, have exempted the people from direct taxes, but which in Switzerland were prior to the very foundation of Berne, and were consecrated to provision for the national worship, to the support of its ministers, to public education, and to works of charity.

* Deux sols & un quart tournois.

The Finances were managed like those of a well-regulated family; the balance of receipts and expenditures was invariably maintained. If unforeseen cases required some temporary difference, it was immediately made up by economy: the State never departed from this rule. There were no debts contracted, no arrearages left, no retrenchments made upon the public bounties and engagements. The same order prevailed in the audit. Every year the Council of the Finances received the Statements from the Commissioners, and every year this general view underwent the examination of the Supreme Council, by whom it was to be approved.

This mode of administration, a responsibility so immediate, the notoriety of the receipts, and the public necessities, removed all suspicion of misconduct or disarrangement. Had there been since the 14th century a single magistrate accused of peculation or extortion? No publisher of popular calumnies, none of the libellers whose folly and impudence have been taken into pay by the Directory, have supplied the silence of history, or been able to point out one example of collusion. If in so complicated a department some bailiffs incurred blame, it was more for negligence than for breach of trust. On the slightest attempt of exaction in their office, not all the credit of

their family could save them from censure, punishment, and restitution.

For this uniform purity, they were still less indebted to the nature of the administration, than to the spirit which gave it birth. Disinterestedness presided at an association of warriors, and to their successors, an enlightened interest dictated an equal moderation in the use of power and in the expenditure of the public treasure. A Bernese was always known by his manly pride; a pride which ill accords with avarice.

Accordingly the fortunes of those ruling families, which the French robbers have dared to paint as the gulf of the national wealth, scarcely rose to the degree of competence. There were not three of them whose income, accumulated by inheritances, amounted to so much as five or six thousand pounds sterling: a very few had from a thousand to fifteen hundred a-year; and the generality had less. Three hundred farmers were richer than the chiefs of the State. All the avenues to opulence are shut in a country where the offices are scarcely equal to the support of those who fill them, and where the spirit of the government excludes its members from commerce. They were, almost all, men of landed property, who, dividing their time between their estates in the country, and the attention to their duties in the administration, could hold

their possessions together only by method, skill, and frugality.

This mediocrity of fortune, and the difficulty of acquiring riches, maintained the equality which the law had established among the Patricians, and also contributed to smother every attempt towards oligarchy. The indigence of some Patricians would have proved as dangerous to tranquillity as their opulence: but the institution of *family funds* obviated the danger: serving at once as a domestic tribunal and sources of aid, they saved families from decay and dishonour, and the Republic from that class of factious men whom want and disappointment urge to desperate enterprises.

Whoever knows that the emoluments of an Avoyer in office did not exceed 400*l.* sterling a-year, and that half a man's life must have been spent before he could attain that dignity; that a senator did not receive more than 150*l.* sterling, nor a banneret more than 230*l.*; that, to be admitted into the Supreme Council it was necessary to be full nine-and-twenty years old, and that the senate was seldom open to men under fifty; whoever knows too that these stated salaries were the recompense of a daily attendance; that at eight o'clock in the morning throughout the year, each magistrate was at the State-house, and the proceedings of the senate were sent for the consideration of the Great Council, or to

ministerial offices; that to the business of the assemblies was added that of the cabinet; that the old and the middle aged knew no relaxation to this assiduity; that no absence was suffered without permission; and lastly, that no one complained of this honourable drudgery; whoever, I say, has been witness to such emulation, will allow that, if it arose from ambition, it was not of that kind at least which is allied to avarice.

To this picture of integrity could any one oppose the authority of the libels that were published against the representatives of the supreme power, appointed in the provinces to take charge of the public demesnes, the peace of the country, and the execution of the laws, responsible commissioners, chosen by ballot in the Great Council, and known under the name of bailiffs? The Directory depicted them in the following manner on the 28th of January last, in the *Redacteur*, their official journal:

“Of all known tyrants,” say those impostors, “the vilest, and *perhaps* the most wicked, are the bailiffs. In the fulness of their authority, they *levy private duties*:—*besides the tithes*, they appropriate to themselves whatever strikes their fancy at a shameful undervalue; they oblige those under their jurisdiction *to kiss their hands respectfully*; they tear the labourer from his work, and keep him often *whole months* to mend their

seigneurial roads, stables, and apartments. Those bailiffs are modest if in six months they do not peculate above a hundred thousand crowns, besides the revenue they are sure of by the laws and customs."

The veracity of the Directory may be estimated by learning that no bailiff could levy *private duties* without extortion, and that neither the government nor the people would have tolerated so barefaced a crime. Far from *appropriating the tithes to themselves*, the bailiffs, who were temporary trustees of what they produced, were bound to render an account of them every year to the Supreme Committee of the Finances, and had it not in their power to deceive them respecting the amount of a receipt, known to the purchasers, known to those who bid against them, and known to the government itself, who inquired into the sales, which were always public.

The bailiff arrogant enough to have required any one to *kiss his hand* would have immediately been sent to a mad-house. The *itinerum et pontium reparatio* was unknown : and as the government did not exact services for the highways *à fortiori*, the officers did not exact them for *their stables, or their apartments*.

Far from being imposed upon in the matter, the Directory intentionally spread abroad those senseless tales. To give their soldiers the appearance of relieving the op-

pressed, it was necessary to paint the Swiss as Helots smarting under the rod of *Gessler* and the *Landenbergs*.

As to the peculating *the hundred thousand crowns a-year, besides the legal revenue*, the calculation is worthy of the calculators. A hundred thousand crowns a-year may embellish the existence of republican viceroys, who pile bankruptcy upon bankruptcy, who dissipate millions where others spend crowns; who, absolute disposers of the lives and properties of the citizens, keep up their treasure by cutting off heads and confiscating fortunes; who sell peace or war for money; who trade in every thing, from the making of laws to the breaking of them, from public engagements to public decisions; and who at the point of the sword, or by the knife of their executioners, have rendered thirty millions of men tributary to their avarice.

But such magnificence could not belong to magistrates presiding over three or four leagues square. Let us reduce this superabundant tariff, on which the Directory compute their opulence, to its just measure.

The *averaged annual* income of the bailiwicks, very unequal in extent and receipt, never amounted to more than 900*l.* sterling. Not a farthing of this money came out of the pockets of the people or was levied by any tax, but arose solely from the fees for collecting, given to the bailiffs on

the feigneurial demefnes and revenues, of which they were the stewards.

The officer who performed the duties of this appointment being removable every fix years, his whole remuneration could not exceed 5400*l.* sterling. But this fum was by no means clear gain. Allowing for the perquisites of the harvest, the augmentation of domestic expenfes, the charges of removal, of frequent journeys, of providing furniture, and of benevolences impofed by custom and duty, each bailiff on an average did not clear above 2600*l.* sterling.

The expectations of four-fifths of the Patricians were limited to this remuneration, which was to form the reward of a perpetual round of labours in the adminiftration. Thus a man at fixty, after ferving the Republic thirty years fucceffively in the Grand Council, coft the State a little more than a 100*l.* a year. And this is the lot which fome foolifh, idle inhabitants of the little towns envied their magiftrates ! Would a farmer have left his plough, or a merchant his counting-houfe, for fuch a falary ?

No ! never were governors more worthy of affectionate fubjects, or of grateful fellow-citizens. Natives and foreigners all can give témoigny to the fcenes produced by the economical adminiftration of that country. No ufelefs expenfe was fpared, no fuperfluous one incurred, and every fudden ex-

igence was provided for. At every step the effect of the public spirit was observable : in their national institutions was to be seen the luxury of a republic, without meanness and without pomp ; buildings noble rather than magnificent, beautified still more by their destination than by the taste of the architect : no splendour, but no ruins or dilapidations. The neatness, support, and constant repair of those edifices proclaimed a tutelary government. The poor, the orphan, the sick, the indigent traveller, found asylums at Berne, where beneficence reckoned comfort among the necessities of life. The very inclosures designed to shut up vice and crime bore the stamp of munificence.

Firm shady roads, which were never neglected, although made and kept in repair at the expense of the government alone, seemed like so many avenues in the midst of an extensive English garden, laid out by Nature. For foot-travellers there were side-paths, and every here and there resting places and fountains. Private, cross, and bye roads were multiplied, and kept like the highways. Expensive as these must have been in a country so uneven, they were extended to the centres of the steepest mountains, to the feet of the never-melting snows, to the hearts of vallies which the traveller would judge to be impenetrable : accordingly, in the course of the last sixty years, the efflux and trade of different wares and commodities,

general traffic, and plenty, had increased in a fourfold proportion.* Places almost inaccessible were cultivated; poor cantons enriched; the produce of industry and labour was every where sure of ready vents, the culture natural to each place having superseded that which was less productive, but which the difficulty of importation had formerly forced into use. This is a sketch of the advantages which the government had acquired over nature, in order to people, adorn, and fertilize decayed towns and parched-up rocks.

How many costly works were there to shorten distances, to open deserts, and to restrain or divert torrents! nor did those monuments of republican grandeur cost the people a single *corvée*,† or a tax!

The State provided against every thing; against storms, inundations, fire, epidemic diseases. No scourge escaped its liberal attention. No community, or subject worthy of being relieved, ever asked its assistance in vain.

* Mr. Arthur Young has very well remarked that the abundance of good inns in a country is the sure sign of a great traffic. In this respect the Canton of Berne rivalled England. In every parish village, and even in districts less resorted to by foreigners, travellers met cleaner houses, better beds, better fare, and were better waited upon, than at the inns of the second-rate towns of France, Germany, and Italy.

† The *corvée* was the free labour required from every person for making and mending the highways. It formerly had place in England, and was a part of the *trinoda necessitas*, to which every man's estate was subject, viz. *expeditio contra hostem, arcium constructio, et pontium reparatio*. See Blackstone's Commentaries, b. i. c. 9.

Once in twenty years the adjoining countries had been visited by scarcity. This calamity was to be feared for the Canton of Berne, where, the infrequency of plains and the roughness of the soil confining the cultivation of corn, the harvests were never sufficient for the general consumption : but public granaries, distributed over every part of the State, and managed with integrity, secured subsistence for the people at all times, and often supplied the wants of their neighbours.

Alas ! my pen, unequal to the task, will never be able to do justice to the transcendent qualities of this system of order and consistency ; to that judgment in useful undertakings, that assiduity in improving, that foresight in preventing, that regard for the subject, that thorough knowledge of his condition and interests, those attentions to his inclinations, that character ever moderate, which knows opportunely how to suggest or command, to repress rather than punish, and to temper justice with mercy.

Thus, almost without the appearance of authority, was exercised the art of government, and that other art of preserving, which consists in subduing the changes introduced by time, without opposing them by force, or yielding to them through fear. Incorruptible and impartial in the administration of civil justice, the Courts of Berne

were equally exemplary in their criminal jurisdiction, where they exercised their duty without rigour, delay, or respect of persons. The severe laws of the *Code Carolin*, which had devolved upon Switzerland from its ancient subjection to the empire, was so much forgotten, that a sentence of death in the Canton was a very extraordinary event. There were few crimes, and still fewer punishments. All that tended to extenuate the offence, or reduce the penalty, had sway upon the judgment: the slightest doubt on the fulness of the conviction, delayed the sentence, or produced a pardon. Thus, more than a half of the malefactors condemned to public labour or imprisonment, would elsewhere have suffered capital punishments.

Civil Liberty, secure in her right, was in no danger, either from reasons of state, capricious regulations, or corrupt courts of justice. Arbitrary and clandestine personal restraint was unknown. The French have told us of the *Bastiles* of Berne. Every prison may be made a *Bastile*, and the Revolution has shewn us, that, in the collection and sacrifice of innocent prisoners, *that* of the *Fauxbourg St. Antoine* was not missed: but, at Berne, the prisons were used only for criminals condemned by a legal judgment, or for such as were committed for trial.

Surely such a Government, in the day of its humiliation, deserved to have some

voice raised against its defamers, and in defence of its character. I have heard some slanderers and discontented men censure particular agents of the Government, but not a single one accuse the Government itself. The people nevertheless were not ignorant of the defects of the Constitution; but to their clear-sighted eyes the evil existed in theory, while the advantages were reaped in practice day by day.

This enthusiastic and popular opinion in favour of the Government, has been denounced by the French as the suffrage of a blind fanaticism. What fanatics, good God! and what Sages their enlighteners! Let us observe a few traits of the character of that Nation which raised the pity of the Directory and their stupid devotees.

Proud of his situation, the Bernese farmer gloried in his country and its laws. Better informed than most others, it was as difficult to mislead his natural reason as to subdue his prejudices, to intimidate him by threats as to deceive him in respect to his interests. The merits of the public administration were the constant topic in every village-house: the sagacity of those people equalled the justness of their spirit and the calmness of their habits. On the approach of the elections, the electors weighed the merits or demerits of the candidates: the respect for the ancient families, that predilection so natural for the descendants of

those who had led their fathers to glorious battles, was transmitted from generation to generation.

The countenance, gravity, and masculine physiognomy of this people, demonstrated the consciousness of their strength and of their liberty : their rational submission was unmingled with servility, their pride uninfected with arrogance. They were neither to be forced, nor bribed, with impunity. Nature had tempered their physical and moral constitution, like the granite of the Alps : their inflexible integrity yielded to no consideration ; violence might have crushed without subjugating them ; the sure means of rousing their resistance was to attack them openly ; and they were so tenacious of the minutest of their rights, that their suspicion once raised was rarely suppressed.

To govern without any extraordinary exertions, a people so difficult to be governed, and who under an habitual phlegm concealed the sparks of violent passions, they wanted just such a government as their own. Their well-founded obedience resulted at once from affection, experience, and reflection : more dependants than subjects, these republicans considered their magistrates as protectors, rather than as sovereigns : it was the living law which they revered in its organs and in its enforcers ; and there would have been an end to

docility the moment those two characters had been separated.

These delicate relations of subordination and authority formed the study and the civil rule of the Magistrates. They courted popularity always with nobleness, and in return the people paid them homage without meanness; the one did not stoop, nor did the other cringe. Before the Avoyer, who was ever easy of access, the lowest peasant appeared with a firm attitude, a respectful behaviour, and a certainty of obtaining justice.

From the centre of the Councils the spirit of order, of method, and rule, spread to domestic establishments. At a Bernese peasant's every thing was found in its place; nothing neglected, nothing omitted, nothing put off. His roomy house, his farms, his lofts, his cattle, were models of arrangement, neatness, and skill. His apparent slowness never stopped the round of his labours, invariably marked out: if he were seldom found expeditious, he was as seldom found idle. This love of order, this deep sense of the rights of property, appeared in the minutest particulars: a gap in a hedge would have passed for an outrage: no one ever trod out of the footpath that led through a field: the grounds and tillage protected by inclosures, were still more so by the national character. They were as angry at perceiving a trespass as they

were circumspect in not committing any : just, but scrupulous, the farmer, who would not have touched a blade of grass that belonged to another, would have rigorously demanded the restitution of one that belonged to himself.

The discreet division and multitude of patrimonial farms are to be placed among the causes of public prosperity. This circumstance had expelled that destructive disproportion between a handful of ravenous landholders and an immense nation of day-labourers ; it helped, for the same reason, to raise wages, which were as high in the mountains of Switzerland as in the vicinity of opulent capitals. If there were less superfluity, there was also less penury : distress in country places was occasioned by want of order, by idleness, and sometimes by misfortune, very rarely by the want of resources, or a total loss of property. If we were astonished at the opulence of a considerable number of farmers,* we were not less astonished to see close to them a great many proprietors in easy circumstances, and estates daily improving. The man that was poor stood in no fear of the

* Several possessed from twenty to thirty thousand pounds sterling, and many from two thousand to five thousand. It was not uncommon to find valuable prints, atlases, books, and musical instruments, among their furniture. There were very few, even among those least at their ease, or of either sex, who could not read, write, cypher, and exercise some art or trade. The same man was frequently an architect, a mason, a carpenter, an upholsterer, a ploughman, and a weaver.

extremities of want, for he might depend upon the Government, or his Community, for assistance : neither the rags of indigence, nor beggary, were suffered to cast a gloom upon the scene of public felicity.*

Whether the observer visited those rural habitations, the decorations of which displayed the taste and prosperity of their owners ; or went through those public markets, where among twenty different dresses not one shabby suit of clothes was seen, and whither, in carriages of rustic elegance drawn by high-fed horses, the farmers came to sell what they had to spare after they had supplied their own wants ; whether he took a view of the rural economy, of the rapid progression of its improvement, of the folds stocked with gigantic breeds, of the meadows watered at great cost by miracles of industry ; or contemplated the people at their festivals or at their labour, under arms or in retirement, among their equals or among their superiors ; he found men happy with the inviolability of their persons and *property*, free without disquietude, and bearing on

* Every parish, besides its police, its officers, and its jurisdiction, had also its public funds, its revenues and its treasury. No man without being a common burgess could have a share in the management of its affairs ; but he might have a share in the public property, by subscribing to it. Out of 400,000 inhabitants born in the Canton, 8000 or more, who were the children of foreigners, were excluded from the privileges of common burgesses.

their serene and rustic countenances the consciousness of their security.

Admirable harmony between independence and power, between laws and manners ! *There* was preserved in trust the contract between the honour of Magistrates and the allegiance of Subjects ! *There* lay the proof that the happiness of the people is not dependent on political power, and that a paternal administration has a hundred times more influence upon the fate of communities than the most elaborate written constitution.

Light minds have frequently blamed this Government for its inattention to commerce ; a little reflection will exculpate it. Berne, being the seat of a State dependent upon husbandry, and in which the poverty of the soil had been subdued by labour, was bound to give its principal attention to the lands of the country, which formed above three-fourths of the general population. It was a rule to promote traffic, the vent of the productions of agriculture, and even their exportation, when not inconsistent with the public wants. Simple trades, adapted to the working of rough home-raised materials, were encouraged.* Numbers of villages and boroughs owed their opulence to this union of trades with hus-

* The Canton of Berne manufactured linens, tanned hides, hosiery, tapes, distillations, and some printed linens, besides its lucrative trade in cheese, cattle, and horses.

bandry : but it was another rule, to keep free from those manufactories of luxury and foreign superfluities, fit only for great towns and States, where there are men of large capitals, and which would have unhinged a country whose policy it was to increase husbandmen, not mechanics and manufacturers. Other Cantons, less prudent, had stocked themselves with artisans, without being nearly so opulent as the Canton of Berne.

This exclusion had a visible effect upon public morals, by contributing to suppress all desire of a change of situation, that forerunner of disorder in a community of simple, temperate, and laborious men. A Bernese farmer considered himself as far superior to the citizens, whom he neither esteemed nor loved ; he would not have condescended to marry his daughter to a burgher. Matches of that kind were always reflected upon as degrading. His cool and discreet ambition made him aspire, not to change his condition, but to preserve it with all the advantages it was capable of. He might have envied the fortune or the credit of his equal, but never the rank of his superior, and still less the life of a merchant at Basle or Geneva.

What were the consequences of these dispositions ? Less covetousness, discontent, and illicit ambition : the hearts of men at ease, and therefore the Republic so ; attach-

ment to the laws, which secured the comforts of a situation by which the possessor thought himself honoured ; a scope for emulation proportioned to its means ; activity and talents exercised without danger ; subordination confirmed by less inconstant manners ; and institutions as unalterably adhered to as customs.

Although the affluence of foreigners and the corruption of example might have tinged the purity of the inhabitants of Switzerland, they still but slowly followed the fatal bias of the corrupt manners of the world.*

* I cannot without pain recollect a scene which passed before my eyes about a year ago. As I was returning from Zurich to Berne, I fell in, at a handsome village three leagues from the latter place, with a rural wedding, which was at once a picture of the manners and prosperity of the country. It was a custom among the inhabitants who were in good circumstances to give a wedding-feast at some distance from home, at one of those better kind of inns which are to be met with in many villages. The bride and bridegroom with their relations and friends arrived in two-and-twenty carriages, which were all of a green colour, elegant, and as full as they could hold. After the marriage-ceremony, the company returned from church to the inn ; as they came near, the band of music belonging to the regiment of militia, in which the bridegroom happened to be a non-commissioned officer, played several slow and solemn airs. Twenty-seven couple filed off in order and silence, their faces and gait indicating reflection. The bride was not more than four-and-twenty years old. She was ornamented with lace, a nosegay, and still more by her beauty ; her clothes were made of a superfine black serge, and in the fashion of the country : her hair hung plaited to her heels ; the height and ease of her person, the delicacy of her features, and the bloom of her complexion, distinguished her in the midst of her companions ; she was the picture of modesty. The bridegroom, dressed in his regimentals, (according to a rule scrupulously observed,) was not inferior to his bride in the endowments of person, youth, and modesty. The whole party were much alike in point of appearance : they had no superfluous or studied ornaments ; all was rich without being overloaded.

Unaffected piety, respect for age, family authority, domestic happiness, veneration for ancient customs, the submission of youth, moderation in expense, and fear of censure, retarded the decline of principle and duty in every state and condition.

Historical impartiality will not allow me to omit certain shades which disfigure the picture I have been drawing. Some useless

The mirth of the day was tempered by a sense of religion ; and the party did not forget at the inn the ceremony that had been performed at the church, where a solemn engagement had been contracted in the presence of the Deity. Dances preceded the repast, which was superabundant ; the first toast was to the State, the next to the priest who married the young couple, and whose children were placed by the bride and bridegroom. They sat at table a considerable time, from which they rose for the ball ; but, throughout, decent gaiety, order, and sobriety prevailed.

The happy pair did not return home to their village for two days. The expenses at the inn had been previously agreed upon at sixty louis d'ors ; and the pay of the music, alms, and gifts, raised the sum to seventy-five. On expressing my astonishment at this expense, the inn-keeper put an end to it, by informing me that the young woman was an heiress with 150,000 Swiss livres, (near 10,000*l.* sterling,) and her husband a farmer and linen-draper, possessed of a fortune at least equal to hers.

And these were the kind of people whom the mountebanks of Paris came to convince by their cannon-shot, that they were *slaves*, and that the remedy for their *misfortunes* was to be found in the philosophy of *Cbenier*, in the constitution of the year III, and in tribune harangues !

In the midst of this affecting feast, an involuntary thought of the horrors of the French Revolution crossed my mind, and cast a mist on the scene : seized with a secret dread, I implored the Almighty to avert from this happy country the scourges which France was spreading through Europe. Unavailing prayers ! Perhaps this young woman has been sacrificed to brutal violation ; perhaps this happy farmer has fallen by the weapons of the plunderers who have enslaved his country ; perhaps this union, which I saw formed at the altar under the auspices of peace and safety, is now no more than a communion of wretchedness, discord, and despair.

customs, certain antiquated rules, several abuses in the election of the Sovereign Council, its too extensive and daily jurisdiction, stood in need of reform. We might have complained of family pride, and the great influence which number gave to some Patrician houses. Perhaps the base of the aristocracy was too confined for the increased superstructure of general wealth: the patronage of certain offices perhaps required a modification, by which the claims of talents and industry might have gained a due preponderance over birth or chance: the jurisdiction of the bailiffs might have been more precisely limited; the arts and sciences wanted encouragement; the education of the Patrician youth was not sufficiently suited to their political consequence; the idleness, imperious tone, incivility, and disorderly conduct of several of them had given grounds for censure.

But the reform of most of these had for some years past employed the attention of the chief magistrates; and in all likelihood would have taken place, had it not been for the dreadful example of France.

It is not imperfections of this kind that produce insurrections, revolutions, and the overthrow of ancient constitutions. It could only be a foreign eruption that could overwhelm a political society, the nature of which may be thus briefly summed up:

A government of confidence, venerable

from its origin, prescribed by ages, legalized by the invariable consent and allegiance of its subjects : a government protected and supported by the sole power of laws, opinion and sentiment ; whose regular troops amounted to 300 men, but whose public force consisted in a nation bred to arms from their infancy, and armed by the sovereign power ; embodied, disciplined, free, and warlike, who, at the very first peep of tyranny, would in four-and-twenty hours have annihilated the authority that had been so imprudent as to manifest an inclination to oppress.

If any foreign power had a right to become the censor of such a government, the arbiter of such a magistracy, the avenger of such a people, was the French Republic that power ? Was it that parcel of revolutionary law-makers, who have destroyed more men by the sword, by fire, famine, on scaffolds, by wretchedness, anguish, by heaping their victims one upon another in dungeons, than there are words in their innumerable laws, than any attention can fix, any memory retain, and the very reading of which would be the work of a whole life ? ! ! !

The other States of Switzerland were distinguished from that of Berne by less favourable characteristics : the eye was struck with the difference, on leaving the Canton. The variety of the political constitutions sometimes gave rise to different maxims of

administration, and privileges burdensome to the country inhabitants. In the commercial aristocracies, such as Zurich and Basle, civil liberty, under forms in appearance more popular, was in fact more oppressed, by exclusive rights in favour of the burghesses of the capital, in the exercise of arts and trades, and by monopolies in the sale of provisions and manufactures. The nearer these governments approached to democracy, the less was there found in them of disinterestedness and equity; the spirit of trade stifled the liberality of principles and sentiments congenial to aristocracies of military origin. In driving away, or humbling the nobility, the citizens, grown rich, had retained their abuses and exceeded their prerogatives. An exclusion from offices of State was a matter of indifference to the farmer; but he wondered why the merchant should boast public liberty, while he was deprived of that of selling a yard of cloth as he pleased. It was certainly of little consequence to him whether the municipal aristocracy belonged to the whole corporation, or to a certain number of families; but he had reason to complain that they abused their sovereignty in fettering the free use of his industry and property.

These municipal restraints were not allowed in the more aristocratical Cantons. Other defects were observable. In one, too

great an inclination to oligarchy ; in another, too little control over the officers of the government ; a third was not free from imperfection in the administration of justice : but if all was not right, all was rapidly tending to be so : the inconveniences and abuses had been no obstacle either to a very sensible increase of population, or to an astonishing progress in husbandry, or to the display of every sort of industry, or to the general welfare. What country was ever dearer to its inhabitants ? What people had more reason to dread innovations ? What madness could have driven them to abandon to the hazards of a revolution those inviolable inheritances, those properties secured from the fiscal scourge, those domestic administrations, those flourishing and peaceful fields !!

We shall now relate by what means, and by what attempts, the French Directory have succeeded, not in drawing this unhappy nation into a similar folly, but in punishing their resistance, in compelling them to sacrifice their laws, and in chaining them on their ruins.

CHAP. II.

First Effects of the French Revolution in Switzerland. Conduct of the Cantons from 1789 to 1792.

FROM its very dawn, the French Revolution threatened to shake the foundations of all society. The fanaticism of philosophy, the existence and danger of which *Frederic the Great* had remarked to *Voltaire*, was confederated with all the passions of a corrupt empire, to convert into a spring of universal subversion, the unparalleled circumstance of calling the nation to found quietly its liberty. Leaders without experience, without genius, and without character, thought themselves equal to direct this event, by resting it upon opinions, which they called *principles*. Till their time the people had been guided by *sentiment*; they flattered themselves to govern them by *ideas*, and excited their passions by corrupting their minds and their consciences. Blending the silly enthusiasm of the leaders of a sect with the shallowness of the leaders of a party, they found themselves perpetually hurried away by the impulse of their doctrines, and novices fettered to the extravagances of their first axioms.

• In consequence of their zeal and their theory, not content with giving a new organization to twenty-five millions of men,

they extended their generosity to the whole human race, and from the conquest of a popular and defenceless king, they imagined they might proceed to that of the universe.

Their arrogance was punished : these scholars of insurrection were very soon hurled from the throne on which they had seated themselves ; but their dogmas and their fanaticism, infecting more expert revolutionists, prepared the way for a systematic overthrow of all governments. The chimeras of their political scheme were of little importance to the foreigner. No happy and well-governed nation would, of their own accord, have thought of bartering their real liberty for the phantom of their sovereignty ; but they went so far as to pretend that it was false that Nature had lavished on men a diversity of gifts, characters, talents, knowledge, inclinations, and consequently of conditions. Accordingly they decreed equality, and ordered the populace to seize it by force. Thus abolishing all distinction between different species, immolating political on the tomb of moral subordination, destroying one after another all the original works of social order, their insolent presumption prescribed to all States, indiscriminately, the imitation of these singularities ; placing them under the double protection of their authority and of their logic. Their means of achieve-

ment corresponding with their doctrine, they transmuted force into right, vice into virtue, popular violence into public justice, and tempted by their success, more than by their examples or their theorems, the morality of the people of all countries.

At first the sparks of this conflagration fell feebly on Switzerland. Some superior minds discerned its tendency, and foresaw its ravages; but the vulgar of all conditions, infatuated with the errors of the times, mistook fabricators of innovations for founders of constitutions, their loquacity for sense, their abuse for a transport of enthusiasm, and their passions for the love of liberty. The mass of the people shewed more astonishment than emulation; every one considered this catastrophe as an attempt confined to France. However, disputes were very soon the consequence of the arrival of the first Emigrants; those Refugees were not aware that it was impossible to make Republicans look upon the whole of the changes that were taking place at Paris with the same eye with which they were seen at Versailles. Growing out of humour with the victims, they became cool to the interests of their cause; a decline of hospitality succeeded, and this concourse of foreigners put the questions of the times into the mouths of the natives.

Until 1790, however, nobody thought of applying the grand designs of the French

nation to the Helvetic people. There was not the slightest appearance of disorder or discontent ; but the spirit of making proselytes adopted by the innovators of Paris, their appeals against all hereditary distinction, their activity every where in stirring up popular ambition, awakened hopes in the minds of some obscure malecontents.

The State of Berne, aristocratic, contiguous to France, and in a part of which the French language was spoken, became the first avenue of revolutionary communications. Plans were laid, and correspondencies established between some Burgeses of the *Pays de Vaud* and a Swiss Club instituted at Paris under the auspices of the Constituent Assembly, principally composed of persons banished from the Canton of Fribourg eighteen years ago, at the termination of an unhappy revolt. Some clandestine libels, some seditious practices, and useless attempts to corrupt the country-people, were preludes to greater designs.

The Government watched without curbing them : its suspicion had not risen to fear ; to make examples they waited for proofs, and with these the petulance of those petty conspirators soon furnished them.

At this time, the *Constitutional Club* (called of 1789) bestowed its attention on the *social art*, that is to say, the art of destroying every thing, in order to leave Revolutionary Philosophy mistress of the ruins of the

world. This headstrong and pedantic society delivered their oracles in a barren paper, where the *sacredness* of insurrections was demonstrated by a comic poet of the name of Grouvelle, formerly one of the secretaries to the Prince of Condé, afterwards secretary to the Executive Council when *Louis XVI.* was executed, and now the Directory's minister in Denmark. This spouting association received information from the Helvetic Club, and sent them some in return :* but the Jacobin Club, which entirely superseded that of 1789, became a more effectual support. Communications were opened between the Society at Dijon, and the malecontents of the *Pays de Vaud*. Some troubles broke out in Lower Valis, which were imputed to a French Agent, who was taken up and driven from Switzerland.

About this period, a low fellow of an advocate of the *Pays de Vaud*, promoted to the office of private tutor to the Grand Dukes of Russia, and who shall recur in the course of this work, fabricated a writing at Petersburg which he printed in Alface, and which disclosed the views of his accomplices. In this dissertation, replete

* There appeared at that time a speech, said to have been made in the Club of 1789 by Mr. Duport, in which the project of revolutionizing Switzerland was manifested; but that pretended speech was the work of *Count d'Antraigues*; as was also the report upon Neutral Powers, falsely ascribed to *St. Just*; and a feigned conversation between an Austrian General and a Commissary-General of the French army in Bavaria.

with vulgar stories and historical falsities, the author, whose name was *La Harpe*, traced the plan of a Representative Convention for the *Pays de Vaud*. This fire-brand was immediately extinguished, but its disseminators, encouraged by the moderation of the Government, and by the protection which France afforded to the seditious of all countries, continued their plots.

To expect any success from these it was necessary to seduce the country, to which they were not able to offer the bait, either of church revenues to plunder, poll-tax and salt-excite to annul, or tax-gatherers to turn out; they therefore had recourse to the tithes and feudal services, for the springs of insurrection. Some parishes of the *Pays de Vaud* refused to pay certain duties, and cavilled at all.

The prudence of the Government dispelled this storm the moment it rose. A superior magistrate,* as praise-worthy for his private as for his public virtues, hastened to the spot: he called upon the people to send him an account of their grievances, and the grounds of their complaints: he listened to all they had to say, pardoned misdemeanors, reconciled equity and justice, and returned to Berne, after having satisfied the reason of honest men, misled for a moment by designing fanatics.

This step confirmed the confidence of

* *M. De Muralt*, Chief Treasurer.

the people in the administration : all pretended claims, all idea of change, was banished from the country, and their unshaken attachment to the Government has survived even the destruction of the Republic.

Confined to the silly brains of some attornies, and restless loungers of the small towns in the *Pays de Vaud*, these insurrection-vagaries had not reached the German party, who formed four-fifths of the Canton of Berne : the rest of Switzerland remained uncontaminated. There was no State in Europe so secure from the contagion of French principles ; every thing was an antidote to this pestilence : the slow and phlegmatic character of the inhabitants, their rooted and powerful habits, the experience of a government adapted to their dispositions, and, in fine, the soundness of their judgment, which guarded them against the seductions of the pen and of the tongue. In the Roman Catholic Cantons the Revolution was an object of horror, in the Protestant Cantons simply an object of curiosity.

We have observed that the infection had spread only to certain towns in the *Pays de Vaud*. Fortunately those boroughs (Lausanne excepted) were little more than villages of the larger kind in England. Though they contained some thousands of souls, they had scarcely any populace, and few of those workshops crowded by turbulent work-

men, who have no country, and are always ready to seek resources in disorder. They contained a mixture of husbandmen and merchants, and had no influence upon the country, nor any individual of sufficient consequence to make himself feared or respected.

The Nobility, generally enlightened and faithful, though inadmissible to the Sovereign Council of Berne, looked to the Government for protection, and persevered in their loyalty. The Clergy wished for more ease and consideration, but far the greater part of its members thought as the Nobility did. The Peasants were unanimous against the innovators. The circle of these therefore was confined to some idle Burgeffes, a score of Attornies whose only talent consisted in fomenting and protracting law-suits, a small number of Merchants who had taken it ill that the Senators of Berne should sell muslins and linens, and who thought they were themselves capable of ruling the State; and, lastly, to some inexperienced youth ruined by the philosophy of Paris or of the University of Gottingen, who believed themselves to be men of letters because they had taught some Russians or some Englishmen the dialect of the *Pays de Vaud*. In this miserable assemblage of revolutionary apes, there was not a spark of energy, not a shadow of talent, no capacity for business, no information, hardly any passions but the

foolish vanity of rising from the nothing to which nature, much more than the constitution, had doomed them.

This sketch accounts for the original indifference of the Government for them, and the contempt of the people for such reformers. But behind the skreen of this contemptibility, their machinations, their correspondence with the Jacobins of France, began to unfold. They turned their hope towards the Constituent Assembly, who were receiving at their bar banditti and malefactors, that from every part of Europe hastened to complain to them of their superiors. At length, on the unfortunate *Louis XVI.* being taken at Varennes, and dragged back a captive to his palace, by those whom his magnanimity had called to the legislative honours, the caballers of the *Pays de Vaud* broke out. Drunk with joy, and with wine, they celebrated that event in a full meeting: their Bacchanalian riots were signalized by the most daring acts of sedition, imprecations, songs against the Government, and all the riot to be expected of intemperate Revolutionists. More than half of the guests were taken for dupes, and hurried on, without suspecting themselves, by the impulsion of the leaders.

Scandalized at this outrage, most of the *Communes* voted addresses of fidelity to the Government, who, in order to prevent the repetition or progress of the disorder, dis-

played their strength and authority. Assured of the public disposition, they ordered a small body of militia to Lausanne, which was joined by the militia of the *Pays de Vaud* itself. This preparation served, as was meant, to intimidate, not to attack the culprits, who were left by themselves in the midst of the whole nation. According to the ancient customs in cases of high treason, a Supreme Court was erected to inquire into the crime; and, after a laborious proceeding, five or six of the ringleaders were sentenced to a short imprisonment, and nearly the same number were banished for a limited time. The principal leader, who betook himself to flight, was the only one condemned, for contempt of court, to be beheaded.* Even the greater part of these sentences were in the end remitted by the clemency of the Executive Power: in six months two of the prisoners were released, and the confinement of most of the others was shortened. The awe of severity is here felt without its rigour.

It was, nevertheless, this mild punishment of crimes committed against the State, this judicial and legal act, by which not a drop of blood was shed, which the rev-

* His name was *La Harpe des Utins*. He was a man of no mind whatever. He had been in the Dutch service which he quitted, and not being able to acquire any importance in his own country by setting up for a demagogue, he entered into a battalion of national guards in France, and at his death was a brigadier-general in the army of Italy.

olutionary scribblers compared to the *terrorism of Robespierre*. And does such an accusation come from Republicans who, for eight years past, have been assassinating or arbitrarily transporting whole classes of citizens? who have consumed several millions of confiscated property, and who support their abhorred existence only by a periodical renewal of rapine and proscription?

The incident of the *Pays de Vaud*, as a specimen of the national pulse, proves how deep the roots of public order had shot. The disturbers of the peace were alarmed, and feigned amendment, their credulous adherents were undeceived, the Government resumed its security, all Switzerland was calm, and the possibility of a Revolution from within was given up as a chimerical idea, even by the most sanguine of the ill-disposed.

But a cause always in motion never ceased to conspire against the tranquillity of every state. Saved from the poison of French opinions and the enterprizes of their proselytes, Switzerland had still to defend herself against the new power which those opinions had erected upon the ruin of the ancient Monarchy. To the first Convention, which with its last sigh regretted, not the evil it had done, but that which its example and its code were about to do, succeeded a Legislature which promptly threw off the obligation of alliances and of public treaties,

and cited the Powers before its Tribunal. Its existence was marked by a series of outrages against the Swiss. Day after day the stipulations of the Helvetic Body were infringed. The discipline of its Regiments in the service of France withstood all the attacks of the corrupters, who, after dissolving the French army, were exasperated to find that their licentiousness, debauchery, and plunder, could not seduce thirteen thousand Swiss, whose conduct presented the unusual view of a strict subordination in the midst of general disorder. Vain were the attempts made at different times to break in upon their regulations, and to disturb the proceedings of their courts-martial. In spite of Revolutionary frenzies, the ringleaders of the mercenary revolt of the regiment of *Chateaufieux* at Nancy had been punished, some capitally, others by being sent to the galleys. This example, demanded by the Swiss regiments in general, was, a year after, made a pretence, by the Republican party and their accomplices in the Legislative Assembly, for insulting the Helvetic Body, and for wresting from its military judges all their authority. Forty malefactors, assassins of their plundered officers, of the brave *Desilles* and National Guards of Lorraine, abhorred by their country and fellow-soldiers, were suffered to leave the galleys at Brest, to be presented at the bar of the Legislative Body by the

same Comedian who afterwards proclaimed the Republic and decimated Lyons, and to receive from a gang of madmen, set up as representatives of the people, the *honours of the sitting*, and those of a public triumph.

A few weeks before, the Bernese regiment of *Ernst*, whose services and fidelity awed the Jacobins of Provence, had been surrounded in their barracks at Aix by the ruffians of Marseilles and Avignon, abandoned by the people in power, betrayed by an artful villain,* disarmed and pillaged. The same fate befel the Zurich regiment of *Steiner*, then at Lyons, which received orders to march into the South of France, at noon, after the battalions had been separated, a separation against which the Lieutenant-Colonel Count *de St. Gratien* and the Officers, in a body, protested with firmness. From one extremity of France to the other, these exemplary corps, molested, denounced, insulted by the Jacobins, found no protection but in their courage and patience. As they gave no encouragement to seduction, as they respected their officers, as they attended no debating societies, and never got drunk with the patriots, they were generally treated as *Aristocrats*.

The Cantons did not remain indifferent to the affronts heaped upon troops so high-

* *Puget Barbantane*, Commandant at Aix. This wretch, who was afterwards a General of Terrorists, was the accomplice of the Marseillois, and gave no assistance to the Regiment of *Ernst*, but advised them to lay down their arms.

ly worthy of praise, or to the dangers that surrounded them. Zurich ordered its regiment not to leave Lyons, and sent a complaint to the King. Berne recalled the regiment of *Ernst* to Switzerland, and notified this resolution to his Majesty in a letter replete with dignity, in which they thus addressed that Monarch :—" We will not afflict your heart, Sire, by the particulars of the perfidy and atrocity which have characterized the event at Aix. In an open war against the declared enemies of your Majesty, the regiment of *Ernst* would have lost their lives sooner than their arms. The honour of the regiment, and the protection we owe it, oblige us to recal it from a country where the treaties, on the faith of which it was sent, are violated with impunity."

This step affected only the King, who was grieved at those enormities which he had not the power to prevent, and who was impressed with an hereditary affection for the Swiss. The Legislature, who were only seeking enemies, laughed at the complaints of Berne; the Ministers, placing all their honour in cringing to the Jacobins, felt little for the insulted honour of others, and saw in the noble resolution of the Bernese nothing more than a fit of ill humour, which they thought to dispel by disgraceful expressions and atonements.*

* The ministry was then composed of *Roland, Clavière, Dumourier, Servan, La Goffe, and Duranton.*

Their levity never suffered them to suspect what an impression had been made on all ranks and conditions in Switzerland by this insolent contempt of their country, these violations of the right of nations, of hospitality, of stipulations, of public faith. M. *Barthélemi*, who immediately after came to reside in Switzerland as ambassador from France, can testify the national resentment, the effects of which fell upon himself.

It is, perhaps, no paradox to say, that it was an unfortunate star for the Helvetic Body, that ruled the choice of this gentleman for envoy. He had just refused the appointment of minister for foreign affairs, and hoped, in his embassy to Switzerland, to find a harbour against the storms of the revolution. In naming him, the King was guided by a personal regard, by his attachment to the Cantons, and by the merited consideration which M. *Barthélemi* had obtained, as well in France as in foreign countries. Nobody possessed in a higher degree the character fit for his situation, or qualities more suited to the country and to existing circumstances. His very faults promoted his success ; for less temperate habits, and a conduct less easy, would have completed the alienation of the Swiss.

Coldly received, obliged to give up his residence at Soleure and remain at Baden, he bore without spleen this painful situation, which was made still worse by the ca-

taſtrophe of the 10th of Auguſt, 1792. His mildneſs, moderation, and retirement, inſenſibly diſarmed diſtruſt : he compelled general eſteem, forced praifes from his enemies, and by diſcretion and ſkill removed the thorns that were ſown in his way. Many of the Swiſs deteſted the French ambaſſador ; but all reſpected M. *Barthélemi*. It doubtleſs required great merit to atone, in the eyes of a nation impreſſed with principles of allegiance, for the weakneſs with which M. *Barthélemi*, the miniſter of *Louis XVI.* ſunk into a public agent of the aſſaſſins of that Monarch, to whom he was bound by intereſt and gratitude.

Amid the changes and ſtorms of a fiery Government, which never negotiates without inſulting, the conduct of this miniſter remained invariable. He ſoftened the virulence of its inſtructions, warded the blows aimed by the tyrants of Paris againſt the Cantons, endeavoured by his reports to calm the frantic agitation of the French rulers, and to ſecure peace to this nation, now become his country and aſylum. Engaging to all, open to every application, diſcreet in his opinions, and making much of the French party without offending their opponents, he reconciled the ſad duties of his office with thoſe of juſtice, and with the feelings of his heart. Conſtantly beſet by the retinue with which his Government had ſurrounded him, and who were more

spies upon him than his officers, he at least prevented their execrable administration from disturbing harmony. He answered all complaints, sometimes redressed injuries, and grieved for those he could not prevent, never concealing his indignation at them.

Though such a man was little suited to that succession of unruly miscreants, who were snatching the government of France out of each other's hands, he was kept in Switzerland as long as it was requisite to lull the inhabitants in neutrality. He was more than once on the eve of being dismissed, and consequently of mounting the scaffold; yet his timid circumspection would now and then give way to the overflowing of his affection, to intercessions that exasperated his masters, and to commiseration for that crowd of victims, which were multiplied wherever French intrigues or French arms could gain an ascendancy.

He had the skill to turn to advantage the spirit of party and internal rivalry, which existed in certain senates of Switzerland, as well as the jealousies among some of the Cantons. He rekindled the embers of the old enmity against the House of Austria; persuaded a number of the magistrates that the war was of a similar nature to preceding wars, and that it was their interest not to destroy the balance between the Emperor and France. Most of the States were gained over to that system;

they saw the government of France in the person of M. *Barthélemi*, the revolution in his cabinet at Basle, and their perfect security in his integrity. This enthusiasm excluded all foresight. By considering this transient, and in fact devoted, minister as their guardian angel, the Swiss forgot that they were to be their own protectors. It was by keeping up this implicit faith that M. *Barthélemi*, with upright intentions, led on the Helvetic Body to their destruction, by making them neglect every other safeguard but his, every other means of preservation but an unlimited condescension to the caprices of the French Government.

A few weeks after his arrival in Switzerland, M. *Barthélemi* received from M. *Dumourier*, who was for a short time minister for foreign affairs, secret instructions, and a letter for the Government of Berne. No outset was ever more awkward: *Dumourier*, with the spruce style peculiar to himself, requested Berne to forget the shameful insult that had been received by the regiment of Ernst. "The history of Switzerland," says he to those grave republicans, "*swarms with similar incidents*. The aristocracy of the officers had given offence to *patriotism*. The regiment shall be redressed; and the commander shall have a compensation. I invite the Canton to return to *calmer ideas*. There should be a Diet to settle the difficulties: the interests

of *nations* would be better explained by it, *those interests so often forgotten.*"

When he wrote this revolutionary nonsense, *Dumourier* had probably the red cap still upon his head. He ordered *M. Barthélemi* to return to *Soleure*, where he would not be received : he exhorted him to keep the Cantons upon their guard against the influence of *Berne* and *Zurich*, and to persuade them that war, if *Switzerland* were successful, would precipitate the *Helvetic Body* under the dominion of its principal members. These counsels concluded by informing the ambassador, that he was to be allowed an extraordinary salary of *a hundred thousand crowns*, not for the unworthy purpose of corruption, far beneath a free nation, but to maintain his dignity in a suitable manner.

This parade and these instructions were to no purpose ; *Berne* persisted : *M. de Watteville*, commander of the regiment of *Ernst*, rejected all compensation ; the colonel, *M. d' Ernst*, refused the order of *Military Merit* ; the corps itself was not redressed, but returned in the month of *June* to the Canton, where its arrival spread through every mind the sentiment of indignation with which it had quitted *France*.

Notwithstanding these dispositions in the people, and the force they might have given to the desire of national vengeance, the government of *Berne* endeavoured rather to calm them. Two months before, a new

scene had opened at Paris, and brought with it new dangers to the neighbouring States.

Weary of provoking foreign powers without effect, the legislature, under the dominion of the Girondists, had just declared war against the Emperor, and were preparing to proscribe all crowned heads. That of *Louis XVI.* and the fall of his constitutional throne were to open their way to universal revolution. In order to attack, strip, and murder that innocent Monarch with the least risk, they deprived him of the defence which the new laws had given him. It was necessary also to get rid of the Swiss guards, who were ordered to remove their quarters preparatory to their being finally disbanded. The officers of the regiment, authorized by their Sovereign, gave a determined opposition to this measure; but this resistance could not be of long duration: every one saw that this regiment of heroes would be infallibly sacrificed; several of their officers declared to me, at the time, that they should never leave Paris alive.

This just foreboding was, alas! too little felt in the Cantons. Although incensed at these repeated hostilities of the Legislature, and by the contempt with which their representations were treated, they still persevered in the resolution of maintaining peace. The general Diet determined upon

and declared their neutrality in the month of May, 1792. Many powerful considerations overcame resentment ; and among those I number the personal and repeated entreaties of *Louis XVI.* to preserve to France an ally, and to spare Switzerland a rupture, the consequences of which could not be calculated.*

This resolution of neutrality was confirmed in the month of September following, notwithstanding the events that had taken place in the intervening time. The crimes of the 10th of August had thrown all Switzerland into mourning. Six hundred and fourteen Swiss guards murdered for defending *the king and the law* ; their major dying under the axe of an executioner ; twenty-four officers massacred with as little regard to shame as to pity, and pieces of their flesh paraded through that horrible capital, amidst the streams of blood which *philosophy* there caused to flow ; the broken remains of this heroic corps forced into almost impenetrable retreats to escape the assassins, their properties pillaged, made the reward of their murderers, and the very name of Swiss become a decree of proscription ; the feeble remnant of those warriors

* I have seen the proofs of this assertion, and I invite those who are in possession of them to publish them, if their situation at present will permit it. *Louis XVI.* had only to wish it, to have roused a great part of Switzerland, but he preferred soliciting privately their neutrality. This is the monarch whom a gang of villains devoted to death for *having excited war*, which *they themselves* contrived and declared, in spite of him.

whom even savage nations would have respected for the valour with which they had devoted themselves, and to whom posterity will erect altars, passing through a thousand dangers, arriving naked, disguised, and disfigured, on the frontiers of their country ; the sight of these unfortunate men coming to implore protection from their fellow-citizens, their recitals, the cries of their expiring comrades which resounded through all the vallies of Switzerland ; fifteen hundred families doomed to weep for them, the curses of the old, the fury of the young, public solemn mournings appointed in the churches for the victims of that execrable 10th of August, all made vengeance popular, all called loudly to arms : the eyes of Europe were fixed with attention upon this country, where the idea of the revolution was ever after associated with images of horror and dreadful recollections.

Two centuries before, 50,000 Swiss would have marched without hesitation to that bleeding and unsheltered frontier, and fixed a second time their standard on the walls of Dijon ; but circumstances, men, and times, all were changed.

Reflection interposed to allay the public fervour ; the first impressions were made to evaporate ; the secret partizans and emissaries of France laboured to counteract them. However, new incidents arose to

lay the wound open afresh. After exhausting the vilest means to corrupt the Swiss regiments in the service of France and to seduce their men, Brissot, by an harsh report, caused them to be sent out of the kingdom, in defiance of their stipulations, without condescending to settle their retreat with their respective Cantons, without giving them previous notice, or securing for those corps any compensation for being unexpectedly dismissed. Ten thousand officers and soldiers, in recompense for their honourable services and the blood of their ancestors, were suddenly reduced, from a certain establishment secured by treaties, to ruin, which the French Republic completed by stopping the arrears and pay that were due to them. On the return of these regiments, the Cantons, through economy, allowed them to break up and disperse, thus losing an invaluable succour from the deceitful hope of its remaining unnecessary. Berne alone kept its regiment, that of *Ernst*, together.

The system of neutrality adopted by the Helvetic Body under such circumstances, astonished all Europe, and brought blame, inconsiderately, on Switzerland. Few foreigners have dived into the causes which concurred to produce this resolution: causes that have since had so woful an effect on the fate of Switzerland, that we must not omit here to trace their vestige and as-

certain their nature. From this inquiry it will appear, that if very strong and insurmountable motives justified the adoption of the neutrality in 1792, nothing can excuse the lethargic security into which it plunged the Cantons, their unconquerable indifference in the midst of a perpetual fluctuation of critical circumstances, and the total neglect of providing against the consequences that might attend an unarmed neutrality.

It was a strange mistake among foreigners, to consider Switzerland in the same point of view which it presented two or three centuries ago : poor, scarcely established, without cultivation, without arts, unavoidably entangled in the quarrels of its neighbours, making of war a resource and a trade, having the manners of a nation entirely and for ever under arms : Now, a people of peaceful proprietors, laborious husbandmen, rural economists, called upon by a soil generally ungrateful for unremitted care and daily pains ; preserving, it is true, the martial spirit of their ancestors, but without restlessness and perturbation ; ready to fight in their own defence, but divested of all the passions, all the incentives which, in old times, used to carry them to fight for strangers.

The effects of this alteration conspired with other causes in favour of a permanent peace ; first with the division of the Helvetic Body among so many States, whose

external relations differed essentially ; then with a very imperfect federal system, maintained by the independence of the respective members of the Union and their mutual protection at home, and by no means connected with foreign and offensive wars ; and lastly, with the difficulty of bringing to the same point, and determining to a prompt and steady execution, so many distinct governments, none of which enjoyed a sure preponderance.

The whole economic and political system was co-ordinate with this state of long tranquillity. The alterations that had taken place in the art of war, the great standing armies, the weight of subsidies requisite to support them, left Switzerland far behind the military powers. Every thing was to be done from the beginning before hostilities could be undertaken, that too in a country without any financial resources, and with a people without taxes. Frontiers of sixty leagues to be protected, and those accessible in many places, did not admit of their being every where defended against an enemy always prepared, and who by a sudden inroad might have carried fire and sword through country places and unfortified towns. At the sight of such disasters the inhabitants would have regretted the repose they had enjoyed ; and the consequences of those regrets, envenomed by the

French, might have endangered internal tranquillity.

As the nation itself, and only the nation, composed the army, was the Government at liberty to engage in a war without their concurrence and confidence? Now, the generality of the inhabitants were far from perceiving the necessity of a rupture. The multitude never look forward, they seldom resolve to encounter present dangers in order to escape future ones. The first difficulty therefore to be overcome was that of opinion; the first preparation to be made was that of arguments to convince the minds of men, and incentives to rouse national passions. But this, being a work of time and patience, required a union of views, skill, and consistency in the different regencies, that no statesman would have dared to answer for.

Besides, it is clear that in such a situation of things, it would have been very rash for the Swiss to have flown into the contest, unprovided as they were with fortresses, a regular army, military organization or extraordinary resources, before they had adjusted their operations to those of the rising coalition, and were assured of its concurrence, of support, and of subsidies.

Not any of these preliminaries existed: the mystery of the coalition was confined to two Powers, the one compelled to defend itself and the other to succour its ally. The

other monarchies seemed to be excluded, or to have excluded themselves from the contest : its final aim remained enveloped in obscurity, and the means of the allies were a secret of State. A partial war between Austria and France, and which on the part of Austria appeared with all the marks of a common war, did not affect the Swiss more than the former hostilities between those two Powers. Is it to be wondered at that a similarity of conjunctures should beget a similarity of conduct in the Helvetic Body, and that they should persevere in maxims, the wisdom of which had been attested by an experience of two centuries ?

They were not invited to renounce them by any advantage, any motive of safety, any assurance of succour. The Court of Vienna kept profound silence : the resolution of neutrality taken in the month of May having been notified to it, no reply was given to the notification till the 29th of August following.

In those dispatches his Imperial Majesty assured the Helvetic League, “ that he thought their resolution to observe a strict neutrality consistent with circumstances, because under shelter of that neutrality it was to be imagined they would be secure from the danger of an inroad by a superior enemy.” Recollecting afterwards the invasion of the bishopric of Basle by the French, and the treatment given to the Swiss Regiments,

his Imperial Majesty desired the Swifs to confider whether or not they *ought to persevere in their first resolution*, and declared to them that if they did, he would acknowledge and inviolably respect the neutrality.

This communication was not accompanied by any proposal, any offer of subsidy, or of acting in concert. Far from any encouragement being held out to the Swifs, the frontiers on two sides were left almost entirely exposed. While the Court of Turin, wavering, wary, rather inclining to neutrality than to a rupture, kept lamely on the defensive in the Duchy of Savoy, the Prince of *Esterhazy*, appointed to the defence of the Brisgau, had scarcely 6000 Imperialists under him, joined by 4000 French Emigrants under the Prince of *Condé*. So weak a body, and 12,000 Piedmontese in Savoy, appeared to Switzerland but an insignificant assistance against an enemy already master of the bishopric of Basle, with an army in Upper Alsace, that would not be long before it invaded Savoy, as well as seized upon Spire and Mayence.

Thus threatened on two sides, the neutrality of the Helvetic Body was imposed upon them. It was complained of, that they had refused the Prince of *Esterhazy* a passage through the territory of Basle, while he was seeking an opportunity of penetrating into Porentrui and Franche Comté: but these complaints have been fully answer-

ed by the event and by reason. That enterprize, rash at least, would have involved Switzerland in its consequences, and abandoned her to the resentment of an enemy so superior, that, a few days after, they burnt the Austrian magazines with impunity, nor was Prince of *Esterhazy* in a condition to stop their progress.

That general even thought himself so much in danger, that he called upon the Swiss for attention, and for succour against the design which it was said the French had of making their way to the right bank of the Rhine through the Helvetic territory. Almost at the same moment, the unskilfulness of the Piedmontese commanders in Savoy lost that Duchy without a battle: the King of Sardinia also applied for assistance to the Swiss, who, deprived of that of the neighbouring nations, could not hesitate a moment to remain quiet.

These well-known particulars over-ruled all idea of engaging in the war. Resentment, the justness of their grievances, the certainty of the danger that threatened civil polity and society from the atrocious character now assumed by the Revolution at Paris, were subordinate to prudence and the immediate interest of the public. After the close of the campaign of 1792, would it have been judicious to blame the Swiss for not taking a part in it?

But there is a very important difference:

between a neutrality in fact, and a neutrality precipitately decreed and declared ; between an absolute neutrality and a conditional neutrality ; between a neutrality commanding respect by manly means, and a neutrality exposing a defenceless State to the mercy of pretensions, insults, and events. Neither the Helvetic Councils nor Diet ever thought about it. The real considerations which justified the neutrality were almost all circumstantial ; but they were converted into invariable reasons of state. While the ravages of war were elsewhere displayed, the Helvetic Body, lulled by the serenity of a transient calm, fell into a dream of expenseless and undisturbed security, and thought themselves invulnerable while they were not called upon to fight against the French.

This slumber, the length of which conducted Switzerland to the lowest degree of humiliation, successively infected the majority of the Governments. It was to no purpose that some more enlightened and steadier Magistrates appreciated the future, and the delusion of their colleagues ; a victorious Opposition, ever since the year 1793, triumphed over every measure that tended to secure the independence of the country, upon any other basis than that of French amity and the rescripts of M. *Barthélemi*.

Let us see the sources of that opposition, which it is time to impeach of having been

accessary to the destruction of Switzerland, and of having hastened its last hour.

It is well known that the Canton of Zurich, privileged to hold the Helvetic Chancery, empowered to call the Diet, and which stood first in rank, was neither so in extent nor influence. Berne disputed the latter with her over the rest of the Confederation, and commonly carried it at Lucerne, Fribourg, and Soleure, evidently prevailing more by the ascendancy of her wisdom than by that of her power. Zurich, that had long been distinguished for the superiority of her Magistrates, seemed for some years to have been upon the decline ; the Confederates no longer observed in her Councils that degree of adherence to their maxims, that steadiness and knowledge, of which they had given so many instances. Their jealousy of the moral pre-eminence which Berne had acquired broke out on every occasion. Those seeds of dissension were nourished by the embassy from France, which had established a party at Zurich so soon as the year 1792. They disliked the energy manifested at Berne, and hoped to render it fruitless. The advice of an immediate and passive neutrality, of shewing respect to France, of indifference to the other Powers, of some sacrifices for peace, and of acknowledging the French Republic and its ambassador, was the work of Zurich. Nay, more than

once they were known to adopt resolutions without submitting them to their associates.

That Government, nevertheless, contained citizens of merit, and a Chief Magistrate of great knowledge, penetration, and skill in business; but attention to their preferment, and the necessity of preserving their popularity with a restless body of citizens, who were absorbed in the interests of their trade, compelled those Magistrates to perpetual pliability, by subjecting them to public opinion. It is but justice to believe and to say, that the greater part of them, superior to their fellow-citizens, espoused their passions against their inclinations, and that they were hurried along with the general sentiment, without sharing it.

The abettors of France, veiling at Zurich their predilection for that power under the mask of neutrality, sought and found recruits in the principal Helvetic Governments, among those whom the spirit of party, the want of credit, jealousy, and chagrin at being forgotten in an almost imperceptible minority, had rendered discontented. Some enthusiasts of the Revolution of 1789 joined this battalion: the class of stock-holders in the public funds of France, and afterwards holders of assignats, the brokers of that paper into which a part of their fortune had been converted, and all that stupid multitude whose blindness was

not to be cured, either by the continual bankruptcies of the French Republic, or by the evidence of her financiering cheats, gave their support to the enthusiasts, and provided arithmetic demonstrations for the speculators.

The ambassador of France took the direction of this party, which, secretly governed by a foreign influence, extolled his patriotism, by attacking that of his adversaries. One *Pfiffer*, the son of a magistrate of Lucerne; one *Ochs*, the chief Tribune at Basle, who at his outset was a revolutionary fanatic, but who afterwards cloaked inordinate ambition and insolent pride under the exterior of philosophy and the popularity of his speeches, active and turbulent, exasperated at not governing the councils of Switzerland, corrupted like many others by the perverseness of his mind, at first a demoniac, then frigid, and crowning his qualities by becoming the chief agent of the designs of the French Directory, and of the ruin of his country; a Colonel *Weiss* at Berne, who, after trying every way to make a noise, could not accomplish a reputation; and some others, whose names it is not worth while to draw from oblivion, formed the Privy Council of this tacit alliance with the French Republic.

This Cabal, every where weak, hated in several Cantons, still more despised if possible than despicable, drew resources from

the rebuffs experienced by the Allies in the autumn of 1792, from the increasing popularity of M. *Barthélemi*, from the fright that began to seize on weak minds, and, above all, from the spirit of party.

Their whole force was employed to ruin at Berne the credit of the *Avoyer de Steiguer*, whose abilities, experience, services, and character, had obtained him the highest respect both in Switzerland and among foreigners. The influence of this Magistrate had for fifteen years directed most of the political transactions of the Confederacy. The majority of the Sovereign Council of Berne paid the utmost deference to his opinion; the greater number of the Officers of the Government, and the Patriots most esteemed for their zeal, their patriotism, and their knowledge, were among his adherents. The genius of M. *de Steiguer* had lost nothing in the ordinary functions of the Magistracy. A sagacious statesman, an experienced senator, an orator of no common rate, his mind was of greater expanse than his country. Few men possessed in a higher degree the art of conducting a debate, the power of intuitive perception on complicated questions, the talent of seizing and turning objects on all sides, of unfolding causes, effects, consequences, and means.

Nothing is more rare than this union of an accurate and a copious mind, enriched

with a great variety of talents. No other man in Switzerland was so well versed in foreign politics. In a weak frame, *M. de Steiguer* possessed a vigorous mind, sometimes irritable, but his high notions of independence were moderated by habit and the necessity he was under of living and acting with his equals and his colleagues, under a form of government which often obliged the most inflexible magistrate to give up his opinions. At the head of a great monarchy *M. de Steiguer* would have appeared in full glory.

He made no show of his application to public affairs, of his invariable assiduity, integrity, and affability, in a Government where those qualities were indispensable. Fully acquainted with his duties, he placed that of maintaining the respectability, the honour, and the laws of his country in the first rank. No personal danger awed him; he had foreseen the consequences of the mortal struggle in which he was engaged: if at times his adherents had to reproach him with submitting to pernicious counsels, his conduct had been more the result of policy than of weakness. His whole life proved him to be as much adapted to times of public distraction as to the labours of a peaceful administration.

This great citizen, who crowned his career by devoting himself in a manner worthy of being remembered, became the focus

of French enmities, and of the assaults of a party which unfolded itself with all the characteristics of a faction.

It took for a chief a Bernese Magistrate, not less attached than *M. de Steiguer* to the Constitution of the State, distinguished for his eloquence, knowledge, and ability ; but angry at being reduced to take an under-part, a prey to his resentment, animosity, and jealousy against the head of the State, provoked at having been thrown out of that dignity, and led by his passions to see the Republic perish rather than suffer it to be saved by his rival.

He drew along with him his rich, numerous, and respected family, his friends, some young people, debaters, and fretful spirits. The Government was split ; public deliberations became texts for controversies ; and the same schism was brooding in the other Helvetic Senates.

But while the majority were hesitating, the French faction became at length victorious by the defeats of the Allies. From the commencement of the war, *M. de Steiguer*, foreseeing, from historical examples, the natural probability of the event, and the instability of a Revolution no longer supported but by poniards, appears to have placed too much confidence in the politics and arms of the Allied Powers : he predicted plans and successes for them, as was done by most men of just minds ; for it

was necessary, in a manner, to violate reason, and to suppose improbability, to divine what did happen.

The disrepute which the events threw on that opinion is easily imagined, nor did the adversaries of M. *de Steiguer* fail to turn it to advantage. They represented that Magistrate as the instigator of war, who on the contrary was anxious to prevent the necessity for it, by a conduct that would have put Switzerland into a state not to fear its consequences; themselves they painted to the nation as the preservers of its tranquillity against ambitious disturbers devoted to the quarrel of the Allies: rendered popular by this pacific affectation, they endeavoured to persuade the people that *their* enemies were the enemies of the nation: to perfidious insinuations succeeded the violence of calumnies; the prepossessed were alarmed by hints of the revival of the ancient claims of the House of Austria; the weak and peaceful were dazzled with the view of an endless peace; the profits of neutrality were demonstrated to the avaricious; those who were enemies to the French Revolution were convinced that the way to escape was to court it; and the partisans of its doctrines were shewn the influence it would have upon liberal reforms.

Terrors were raised in opposition to the hopes of M. *de Steiguer*. The correspondence between the Party and the Ambassa-

dor of France, which was private at first, was now turned into a regular and official communication. By all these means, and under the auspices of the French invasions, they succeeded in dividing the adherents of M. de Steiguer, a great many of whom were also persuaded that it was right to yield to the necessity of the times, not to oppose a torrent only with grains of sand, and to leave the future to Providence.

It was not arguing very judiciously, to rest upon the unforeseen turn which the war might take, the propriety of remaining indifferent and exposed to its consequences. The neutral States have fallen sacrifices to this sophism : they *would not* see that they should become a prey to a conqueror, from which not any meanness nor any treaty could save them, as soon as ever the Military Powers should be disposed of.

To ward this danger, it was then thought sufficient to oppose it by humility. The French party, sacrificing the honour, the independence, the future tranquillity, and the destiny of their country, to the foolish hope of purchasing favour for the State by its submission, opened the first breach. They broke the Helvetic unity, extinguished generous sentiments, decried thoughts truly patriotic, persisted from pride in their undeceived credulity, and, still invoking the probity of the French Republic, awoke from their five-years-dream, presiding at the obsequies of Switzerland.

C H A P. III.

Situation of Switzerland at the end of the Year 1792, and till the Year 1797.

IN order to explain the catastrophe that has overwhelmed the Helvetic Body, the inconsistency of their measures, and their informal resistance, it suffices to reflect upon the causes of their conduct, such as we have described them. All the events are to be imputed to them ; and if those became irresistible, it is principally because, from the very beginning, they were declared and allowed to be so.

In the autumn of 1792, their future course was not more equivocal than the designs of the French Revolutionists. Scarcely had the Convention proclaimed the Republic, when they smothered the liberty of Geneva, and threatened that of Switzerland ; 'twas the sports of their infancy. Under the empire of the Girondists, they immediately became ambitious to pillage nations and overturn their Governments. Without any manifesto, any previous declaration, in contempt of a neutrality acknowledged by the aggressors, a French army invaded Savoy in the middle of September.*

* *Servan*, the minister of War, wrote thus to General *Mon-tesquiou*, on the 1st September : " Before the 10th of August, it was resolved in the Council of Turin to abide by a very strict arm-

The second step they took was to fall upon Geneva, a neutral State and an ally of the Swiss, but which at the same time was the object of *Claviere's* vengeance, of the covetousness of his colleagues in the Executive Council, and of the revolutionary ambition of the Girondists. "It will be fine," writes *Servan* to *Montesquiou*, "to go and break the chains which were forged by despotism at Geneva, to crush the Genevese if ever they should be inclined to establish the rights of man.—You must enter by consent or by force," added he four days after (October 3d): "they have 2000 stand of arms in that town, of which we are in need. If you enter by force, you will send them to us; if you enter by consent, still you will send them to us, promising to replace them."

While *Claviere* advises *Montesquiou* to extort a loan from Geneva, *Servan* provides for the success of the exaction, by enjoining him to pillage the arsenal, and throw a French garrison into the town. This plunder of free-booters is supported by appeals to the populace against the nation. Geneva, to be robbed and enslaved, must lose her rights and her independence, and France must spread her anarchy. The cannon ad-

ed neutrality. Has that Court changed its mind?—I don't know: but whatever be its intentions, we neither can nor ought to permit you to attack it." Fifteen days after, this same *Servan* and the Council authorise *Montesquiou* to make an attack, provided he play a sure game, and give out that they are going in quest of brothers among oppressed nations. See *Corresp. du General Montesquiou*, &c.

vance, the troops march up, Geneva must undergo the horrors of a siege, or acknowledge her Lawgivers in the Convention of Paris, must become their conquest and their victim, or receive their dogmas and imitate their crimes.

Berne, whose vigour was still unimpaired, armed without delay to protect the frontier and her ally. Notwithstanding the intrigues and threats of France, Geneva called for succours, and very readily obtained them. Zurich, faithful to her alliances, joined her quota to that of Berne; 1500 Swiss were thrown into Geneva, with instructions to defend it to the last extremity.

It is well known that the fate of Switzerland itself was connected with the independence of that city: although that truth, ever before admitted, may have since yielded, with so many other maxims, to timid considerations, Berne appeared impressed with it: in a few days an army of 14,000 men were assembled on the southern frontier, while to the west of the Canton another body of 10,000 watched the French, who, being masters of the bishopric of Basle, threatened Erguel and Munster-Thal, two districts of that principality not incorporated with the empire, but annexed to the Helvetic territory, and sharing its neutrality under the special protection of Berne, and under its ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

These expeditious and manly measures

disconcerted without deterring the French Ministry. They gave orders for the siege of Geneva, and imperiously required the Swiss to leave the town. Every note from that Government, or from its officers, was an insult to the rights of nations, to the respect due to independent States, to natural justice, and to positive law. A newspaper writer, a native of Liege, who directed foreign affairs at Paris, multiplied strong-handed sophisms to demonstrate that Geneva, having committed a crime in shutting her gates, was still more criminal in calling in auxiliaries. In his diplomatic bombast he pretended that perpetual and unlimited treaties could not give the Swiss a right to defend their ally, nor Geneva a right to be succoured, whenever France thought proper to attack it. The inference of this trash, which shocked common sense, was that Geneva, having discovered the instructions of the French General, was *punishable* for having anticipated them, and that its precautions against premeditated outrages gave a right to those which they were committing: the arrogance of the style corresponded with the force of the reasoning. From their tribunal, bathed with blood, the Council of Paris devoted the heads of the magistrates of Geneva, abused its citizens, and proscribed that Republic with as little form as they had just proscribed the victims of the 2d of September.

On his arrival at the frontiers, the Bernese General* notified to *M. de Montesquiou* the object of the armament, the duties, the treaties, the motives which rendered it necessary, the firm adherence of Berne to the principles of neutrality, and its no less firm determination to maintain the rights of it by defending Geneva against every insult. His dispositions were taken during the course of a violent negociation, which, from the moderate temper of the French general, his desire to avoid a rupture with the Swiss, the weakness of his artillery and of his army, and the union and determination of the Genevese, terminated successfully.

Geneva was delivered: but when the Swiss left it, the Genevese lost the spring of internal tranquillity, and escaped the arms of the French only to fall under their intrigues. Content with having preserved for the city the shadow of independence, the Swiss congratulated themselves at having gotten out of the dispute without hos-

* *M. de Mural*, the same who was mentioned before. He had passed his youth in the French service, and carried on the seven years war. Few magistrates enjoyed, or were more entitled to, a higher respect. Honoured with his confidence, it is my duty to say that his conduct was as vigorous as it was prudent. He communicated to me the plan of his march to Geneva, and the positive orders he had for executing it, if the means of conciliation were stopped.

M. de Mural, who died in the winter of 1796, would probably have contributed to fix the fatal waverings amid which his country perished. He was a real patriot and a popular magistrate, serious but not austere, of a very polished mind, of a disposition upright and noble, and he was as powerful in the cabinet as in the field.

ilities. Zurich particularly did not conceal her impatience to disengage herself from an affair which might lead to the sacrifice of neutrality: she took a last leave of her ally, and for the future Zurich considered Geneva in no other light than as a foreign city, whose fate was a matter of indifference to her.

These sentiments were not lost in the Council of Paris. The treaty concluded by General *Montesquiou* answered neither the views nor passions of *Claviere*, *Brissot*, and all those undertakers of revolutions, whose projects were now confirmed by Dumourier's good fortune. Exasperated that the Swiss had dared to counteract them, and that, instead of capitulating, Geneva had obtained equitable terms, they proscribed the negociator, modified the treaty, and declared to Europe the principles of their new law of nations.

Brissot, in his bitter report of the 22d of Nov. 1792, upon the definitive treaty signed by M. *de Montesquiou*, disclosed to all the Powers the object of the war, that of the French Revolution, and the secret of that system, which was hatched under the Girondist faction, torpid under *Robespierre*, languid under his immediate successors, revived and grown from the moment that that faction, throwing off the ashes under which it had been buried by *Marat*, resumed its influence and the reins.—“La-

conism and clearness should *constitute* our style," said *Brissot* in that prolix dissertation of three deadly hours, in which every thing was obscure except bad faith and insolence. "Geneva shall obtain no other treaty than the communication of French principles.— You are to consider whether a free nation can or *ought to bind herself by treaties*; whether they are not *indecent* with any government which does not derive its powers from the people; for it is, perhaps, in that consists the secret of the revolution, *and of those that are brooding.*"

These indiscreet observations served as a commentary on the famous decree passed three days before, on the motion of that *Larevelliere-Lepaux*, who is at this time concurring with the Directory to put into execution the maxims of the Girondists, and their decrees of 1792, by which they granted *fraternity and assistance to all nations who are desirous of recovering their liberty*. On the 31st of October preceding, the Deputy *Gregoire*, preparing the way for this resolution, had got a decree passed for demanding the liberation of three officers of Soleure, confined by their Government for speaking and acting in a seditious manner, "and in case of refusal, the Republic of France should consider such a proceeding *as a breach of the treaties*. Contempt for our principles and persecuting those who profess them," added this modest orator, "are in fact blows giv-

en to the Rights of Nations." *Omar and Batukan* did not speak better.

If Europe mistook the loftiness of this language, if it overlooked the principles, intentions, and invariable character of its enemies, it was not their fault, for they explained themselves very intelligibly. For Switzerland in particular, they had erected a beacon. She was the cause of that political war officially declared against all governments : she had seen a State, allied to her confederacy, and included in her neutrality, attacked without a pretence, and afterwards subverted : she was no longer ignorant that Republican France, despotic arbiter of the relations and alliances uniting nations to one another, acknowledged no prior treaties, no law of nations, no barrier, no neutrality. She became acquainted with the spirit of those republicans by the phrase of *Dubois de Crancé*, who, deputed to attend *M. de Montesquiou* in order to be a spy upon him and to ruin him, said to him, in derision of his negotiations, "*Why do you make so much ado ? I would beat Geneva into the lake with bomb-shells, and send for the Swifs to come and fish it up again.*"

She could not conceal from herself that sooner or later her aristocracies would feel the fanaticism of an association of levellers, and the whole of her States that anarchy and ruin which marked the track of the revolutionary armies and codes. As the war

was to reach her, it will be lamented that she averted it in 1792, to fall a sacrifice to it in 1798: but who foresees such distant evils? Was it to be expected that twenty dissimilar States should concur in that foresight? Is action the usual effect of a multiplicity of counsels? And if some enlightened men did penetrate the future, could they have dared to hazard the present on the dependence of the necessary concert and energy, among so many divided republics?

That their determined ruin was only postponed, is a truth which was proved in the winter of 1793. The implacable Girondists plotted the attack of the Canton of Berne; the military plan of the enterprize was arranged nearly as it was executed five years after; but the late posture of Berne, the checks received on the Roer and in Belgium, the decline of the Brissotins, the disrepute of their ministers, and the determination of coming to a rupture with England and Spain, once more suspended the sword.

The fall of the Girondists gave the Swiss breath. They ascribed to their politics, to the fraternal pamphlets of the partisans of France, and to their repeated protestations of neutrality, that respite granted them by factions pre-occupied by intestine strife, who were immolating one another, drowning their torments in blood, paving the rout of their armies with dead bodies, making

bridges with their generals' heads to come at the enemy, and who were reduced to exterminate France in order to save their empire.

It is certain that *Robespierre* seemed to have abandoned the fanatic emulation of carrying the firebrand of the revolution among foreigners. Seated on the ruins of France, he thought only of securing the possession of it to himself, and allowed the neutral States to exist.

Here began, with the spring of 1793, that slumber of Switzerland, who, lulled by her prosperity, and sleeping on bitumen and saltpetre, was ruled by councils prouder of, and more intoxicated by, those first fruits of neutrality, than attentive to their final consequences.

In the variety of opinions there were three principal ones. The first, which was that of the party already described, tended to an undisturbed and passive neutrality, to avoid, whatever external events took place, every thing that might give umbrage to France, and further to make every concession proper to gain her attachment.

To the second opinion adhered the sincere patriots, not less enemies to the revolution than intimidated by its tempests, who thought to avert its approaches by shutting their eyes to their dangers, who had no confidence in the coalition of the Powers; and who saw less peril in waiting

quietly for better times, than in braving them by quitting the state of observation.

The third opinion was adopted by men of bolder spirits, who, attached to France as a monarchy, abhorred it in its revolutionary form ; who wished for a more manly neutrality, a more respectable posture, a less equal balance between legitimate powers and a band of regicides, and who dreaded the hypocritical friendship of those cameleons as much as the effect of the great pains taken to obtain their good-will.

Among these opinions the Helvetic Republic glided into an abyss ; for the first, sometimes aided by the prudence of the second, dictated from the year 1793 all the general resolutions in the Diets, and most frequently the particular resolutions of the different Governments.

After having made security a want, it was imputed to the disuse into which the extraordinary resources had fallen. The tried courage of the nation, the examples that render their history illustrious, the fame of their natural advantages for defence, the repute of their wisdom, all that had rendered Switzerland respectable, and the prejudices which strengthened that respect, called upon her to support a dignity on which her safety depended : and the best rampart she could have formed for it was the exercise of her independence.

The armament of 1792 had proved the

allegiance and readiness of the subjects. The Bernese regiments of militia had joyfully marched to the frontiers, and had returned with the best spirit ; no seed of disobedience, not a single revolutionary spark was seen. At the approach of the French, no shuffler of the *Pays de Vaud* dared to leave his lurking-place ; the regiments of that province were distinguished for their zeal. Aversion to the enemy spirited them to battle ; the dread of their excesses stifled all love of their principles ; the national pride still preserved its spring ; and no remonstrance clogged the energy of the Government.

It would have been easy to keep up those sentiments, to inspire the people with confidence in their strength, to nourish their impressions against the French, and to exalt them by instructions.

Prudence dictated the taking advantage of times of peace to prepare the means of resistance. The military State required much reform and new modelling : the militia laws and manner of being embodied ought to have been amended, and better adapted to the defence of the country ; attention should have been given to appoint officers, pitch small camps, fortify posts, provide for the organization of an army, and of a commissaryship ; increase light troops, and employ the skill of general officers distinguished by their experience : the regi-

ments returned from a foreign service afforded models.

The defects of the federal system required, if not a fundamental reform, at least some coalition, some previous consultation to prevent the disorder, dilatoriness, and variance, inseparable from unexpected occasions of defence, and which might be fatal in a body liable to a multitude of debates.

Without meddling with the political constitution, it might perhaps have been attended with more advantages than inconveniencies to have accelerated the reforms already projected in several branches of administration, and to have added new links between the interest of the People and that of the Governments.

In such a position, neutrality would no longer have been slavery, or tranquillity a lethargy; and Switzerland would have been spared the shame of serving a *Mengaud* and a *Rexobell* as a laughing-stock. Thus despotic pretensions, unpunished abuse, and the contempt into which every State falls which may be insulted without fear, might have been prevented.

But the ruling party made the system of degradation and non-existence prevail. To no purpose did a number of Magistrates and Citizens pray for the regulations we have been detailing: the dread of provoking the demoniacs of Paris became the

rule of the Councils. Instead of habituating the People to the idea of war, they were entertained only with the charms of peace: when they were to decide between a pusillanimous choice and an act of firmness, the latter was painted to them as a blow to their tranquillity; they were irritated against the Emigrants, and even against the foreign Powers; they were persuaded that the cause of the French monarchy was the cause of all Republics against Kings; and that the war was a conspiracy of despots. These absurdities, disseminated by the emissaries of France, were received by credulous minds, and propagated by *philosophy-reasoners*.

While an unlimited circulation was allowed to French papers, a popular Gazette, printed at Berne, was obstinately persecuted till the useful nature of it was entirely changed. Zurich suffered, under the eyes of its Government, a seditious paper, in which the principles and enormities of the Revolution were daily extolled, and the Allied Powers often insulted. The public mind was left to the impression of those envenomed writings.

From day to day the vigilance over the seducers of the people relaxed. Made the market of the French, Switzerland became that of their corruptions. It was full of Jacobins, whose entrance none deigned to dispute, or to punish their preachings.

There was no longer any barrier to the communications ; the revolutionary spirit poured in at every avenue. The inhabitants seemed fearful of being roused from their indifference, and were offended at predictions meant to put them on their guard. Woe to him who disturbed the general quiet by peevish reasoning on the future, and on the danger of connexions in which they were sinking deeper and deeper ! The majority of the Swiss were like those patients who are angry with the physician for describing their disorder to them.

A number of heads were turned with whimsical absurdities. That Republicans should admit the chimera of a representative democracy substituted in France, at the conclusion of the 18th century, in the room of an absolute monarchy, is a ridiculous illusion : that they should prefer seeing a neighbouring empire governed by a system analogous to their own, is easily conceived ; but in the difficulty of guessing at what Constitution the political Cameleons of Paris would stop at last, they imagined themselves destined to be the model. At Berne it was settled that the Revolution would finish in France in an Aristocracy composed of Patricians and Burgeſſes ; at Zurich, that an elective Aristocracy by tribes would fix the thoughts of those vagabond Legislators : Baſſe did not resign the

honour of providing laws for the inheritance of *Charlemagne*. I have heard grave Senators rejoice at this anticipated conformity, and in its certainty find a powerful motive for tranquillity.

To augur that equality would no more respect Republics than Monarchies, or neutral nations than enemies, was to be tainted with royalism. By believing that there existed in France a popular State, those visionaries persuaded themselves of its duration; and that, to obtain its friendship, they had only to lavish their own upon it: its military successes confirmed that persuasion; and while, on the title-page of its laws, as well as on its standards, was written the motto of

Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain,

they were convinced that this spirit would be a benignant one between the Alps and mount Jura. At length, at the time when fortune abandoned the arms of the Allies, they put up their prayers for peace, as the consecration of the French Republic, and as the term of the disquietudes of Switzerland.

In the year 1794, the symptoms of those various derangements were not equivocal: it is true that too few efforts were tried to divert the course of their influence; there was no proportion between the activity, courtesy, and attentions of M. *Barthélemi*, and the kind of passiveness in which, from



— "on the title-page of its Laws, as
well as on its Standards was
written the Motto of
"Havoc & Spoil, & Ruin, are my gain"
Page 80.



the nature of their instructions, the other foreign ministers remained in Switzerland.

The Cabinet of Vienna, who could have swayed the Helvetic Body by its neighbourhood, by its armies, and other more direct relations, made no alteration in the part or character of its common envoy during peace. On a less important occasion, *Charles V.* sent extraordinary ambassadors to the Swiss, and, among others, a Duke of *Mecklenburg*. During the war for the succession, the interests of the House of Austria were confided to Count *Trautmansdorf*, in the same character. The delegation of such a minister shewed high respect for the Swiss League, flattered the national pride, disposed them to listen to overtures, and became of great weight.

But, notwithstanding repeated representations, a simple resident, to whom tardily succeeded an envoy of the second order, continued to transact in Switzerland the concerns of the Court of Vienna: those concerns too were reduced to an observation of the frontier, and details of neutrality. The Prussian minister was condemned to a like inactivity; and that of Sardinia, in spite of his uninterrupted zeal, had no influence over the general decisions.

Lord *Robert Fitzgerald*, who resided at Berne six months previous to the time when the rage of the French Convention included England in their projects of universal

war, attempted to remonstrate with the Swiss on the danger of their connexions with the enemy of all public order ; but this step only served to prove the empire which France and Fear had already gained in the Councils.

If the embassy of Mr. *Wickham* revived some hopes, it also revived the intrigues of the French legation, the activity of their accomplices, and the opposition of the ruling party. The ruin of Holland, the retreat of the Imperialists, the defection of Prussia, and the peace with Spain, all happening about the time of the arrival of that minister, he was not, and could not be more fortunate than his predecessor. Probably he perceived that he should expose himself by an unseasonable interposition, and also the declining credit of the last Swiss who were mindful of the dignity of their country.

This Diplomatic Body, without regular instructions, joined in no procedure ; they had little communication, and were unanimously of opinion that the indifference of Switzerland was as immovable as its rocks. This country, ever after in chains, resigned itself to the despotism of the French, whose Government had sentenced the Helvetic Body, whose kindness was succeeded by threats, and who dared every thing, because Switzerland dared nothing.

Suspecting the scruples of M. *Barthélemi*, his employers surrounded him with Sep-

tembrists, married priests, and barefaced intriguers, of whom Basle was the common sewer and seat of operations. It was the part of these inquisitors to denounce the ambassador's mildness at Paris, encourage smuggling, and tempt the avarice and political loyalty of the merchants.

Innumerable complaints were constantly pouring in. At one while, France was prosecuting in Switzerland the distributors of forged assignats, requiring the Cantons, on her account, to erect themselves into a court of mint-men; at another, juries would come and establish themselves, to verify that discredited paper which had become a merchandize, and of which only persons in trade could judge; sometimes they would insist upon French priests being forbidden to perform mass, because a number of the country-people from Franche-Comté and Savoy came into Switzerland to kneel at the altars of their religion, which in France had been broken down by the Vandals of *philosophy*.

This French and Savoyard clergy, whose virtues commanded respect, and whose adversity extorted compassion, this clergy, hunted from their country by *decree*, and yet pursued as if they had *emigrated*, found themselves every moment menaced in their place of refuge; Helvetic hospitality with difficulty withstood the shameless complaints with which it was harassed.

The lay Emigrants, perpetually denounced, without any distinction of age, sex, or conduct, could never rest three months in quiet. The French Legation required and obtained a list of the names of those fugitives, which were made the grounds for proscribing their families and properties. The sacred right of protecting the unfortunate was deemed a breach of neutrality.

As the lot of the Emigrants grew more and more deplorable, the cruel persecution of them redoubled. At the time, for example, when the invasion of Swabia in 1796 cut off their last retreat, the Directorial Embassy required their immediate expulsion : this was to consign them to the satellites of their persecutors ; and yet a number of the States did not fail to decree their removal in the month of June : in the Canton of Berne alone, four hundred of them were obliged to fly, or secrete themselves, in spite of the intercession of the British minister ; but the general cry, and the impossibility of passing the frontier, rendered the execution of the order impracticable.

If they attempted to return to France, the Directory accused the Swiss of collusion in furnishing them with passports. Thus they were debarred from France, expelled from the Helvetic territory, and, by a barbarous mockery, pushed upon the conquered countries, where the French Generals would not tolerate one.

Condemned to subscribe to the scandal of these requisitions, Switzerland degenerated into an inquisitorial tribunal of the French Republic. Thousands of generous hearts were bursting with indignation ; and the public feelings, thus shocked, called upon the independence of a free nation, and the sacredness of hospitality. If the States had proclaimed the rights of the latter, they would have silenced the oppressors, and put an end to their urgency. What danger would have been incurred, that has not since been realized, and perhaps accelerated by such persevering condescension ?

The people mourned, the magistrates wept, and I have seen them lavishing assistance upon the Emigrants, while they were signing their expulsion. Private liberality washed out the spot of public rigour, and reproved the reason of State : in the very cottages, numbers of the refugees found retreats and kindness. So evident was the inthralment under which Switzerland groaned, that till the year 1796 most of those ordinances were mere formalities, so little observed as to prove them to have been forced.*

* *M. Barthélemi* was the first victim of the inhumanity of which he was made the agent by his Government. Tortured by griefs which he concealed, he found that all the blood-thirsty notes, with which he wearied the Helvetic Body, were imputed to himself. Numbers of the Emigrants know, and must testify if they are just, how little he partook of the passions of his constituents. Besides, justice compels us to say that the intrigues, the indiscretions, the perpetual excursions of some among them, who were ever in motion, left both their partisans and the States without a plea for defending them.

Oppressed in their opinions, in their police, in their administration, the Cantons bent under the weight of the suspicions and importunities of a hostile neighbour, who made herself the arbiter of their proceedings.

She obliged them to abandon Geneva to its conspirators, while it was expiring in anarchy, weeping upon the ashes of its independence and of its murdered citizens, converted into a French Municipality, and, without government, under a constitution drawn up in four-and-twenty hours, the legality of which France compelled Berne to acknowledge.

The Bishop of Basle, driven to his residence on that portion of his domains which was holden of Switzerland, remained unprotected against the persecutions of the Directory: Berne advised him to fly, in order to prevent new difficulties.

In 1703 and 1704, the Cantons had interposed with energy to prevent a change of masters in Savoy, at that time invaded by the troops of *Louis XIV.* Count *de Méllarède*,* envoy extraordinary from *Victor*

* This negociator, born a Savoyard and of a very ancient family, was a man of courage, sense, and penetration. Being formerly sent envoy to *Louis XIV.* that Monarch complained to him that *Monsieur de Savoie*, (the Duke of Savoy) *his relation*, had dared to form an alliance with his enemies. "Sire," replied M. de Méllarède, "such was the situation of my master, that he would have formed an alliance with the Turks, if your Majesty had not prevented it." *Louvois* being present, was for sending M. de Méllarède, to the Bastille; but the magnanimity

Amadeus, demanded of the Helvetic Diet the guarantee of Savoy to its Sovereign, and the neutrality of Switzerland. "Your treaties with France," said this prophetic Minister to them, "are not such strong shields as to resist the blows she will give you, if, by oppressing your neighbours, she surround you on all sides, and if the intrigues of her negociators conceal from you, that it is not possible to be surrounded by her arms without being subjected to her will."

Upon this, Berne and Fribourg sent deputies to the Duke *de la Feuillade*, who commanded in Savoy, and insisted upon the neutrality of that province. The Magistrates of those Cantons expressed themselves thus: "After our glorious ancestors had, by the valour of their arms, acquired the liberty of their States, they then, by the wisdom of their counsels and the dictates of their foresight, established maxims to preserve this valuable acquisition for their posterity. Among those maxims the most essential consists in taking care to have several sovereigns for neighbours, and not to suffer the countries on which their States border, and which are their barriers, to fall under the same power."

Neither the stateliness, the menaces, nor the promises of the Marquis *de Puyseulx*, the of *Louis XIV.* did not take offence at a sarcasm. In these times, the ambassador who should attempt to speak so to Lawyer *Merlin*, would be thought a lucky man if he were not shot according to martial law at the gate of the Luxembourg.

ambassador from France, could shake the resolution of the Helvetic Body : they declared that if Savoy were not left to its Sovereign, they would send troops to the Duke to guard it. That Prince obtained levies, which were refused to France ; but it was *Louis XIV.* that was reigning, and not a Directory of regicide Lawyers. On the 23d. of May, 1704, *M. de Puyseulx* guaranteed the general Diet, that *his Majesty would not unite Savoy to his crown.*

With this passage of their history before their eyes, while they had in their sight this monument of firmness, wisdom, and greatness, the Cantons, without a word, suffered Savoy to be invaded, revolutionized, and incorporated with France ; and that frontier of their States to be finally torn from its Sovereign, by the capitulation of 1796. In vain did the Sardinian Minister urge entreaty upon entreaty, they had interdicted themselves all action, all remonstrance.

Surrounded by the French arms, at the moment when danger increased with their invasions, and insolence with their successes, Switzerland disbanded the regiments which Providence restored her then from Holland : Berne dismissed even the regiment of *Watteville*,* that intrepid legion, of admirable discipline and spirit, and which was an army in itself. There were no longer other limits to imprudence than the whims of the

* Formerly of *Ernst*.

Directory ; and to defend, the Swiss disarmed themselves.

Even that neutrality which had been made an *Ægis* and a boast, was giving way on all sides. From the very commencement of the war, a federal military force had been stationed at Basle, to protect that city and its environs from an unforeseen passage of foreign troops. As soon as the French entered Swabia, that force was withdrawn : this was declaring to the Austrians that *they* only had been the object of the precaution.

This unnatural partiality could be no longer concealed. When General *Moreau*, nearly surrounded by the Imperial armies, evacuated Bavaria and Swabia, his left wing was obliged to retreat by the confines of Austria. On its approach to the Helvetic frontiers, the Cantons, fearing it might be driven upon them, formed a *cordon* along the Rhine : Berne made more extensive preparations, appointed a general, and kept an army in readiness : her faithful militia left their work without murmuring, and appeared what they had shewn themselves in 1792.

But this measure, which seemed to rekindle a spark of national spirit, was feebly executed. The left wing of the French army, which had been obliged to engage with the Imperialists and the country-people of Swabia, who by the light of their houses in

flames exterminated without remorse those robbers loaded with their spoils, endeavoured and effected its escape by the left bank of the Rhine.

The Helvetic territory was, without opposition, overflowed by those *soldiers of liberty*, those *citizen-soldiers*, those protectors of *cottages*, whose rapacity had not spared a hut. Their arms, it is true, were in part laid down at the frontier, and their horses sequestered, though without being restored to the conquerors. Twelve days successively Switzerland had the patience to tolerate these runaway bands, to subsist them, and to escort their covered waggons, in which arms and booty were huddled with the sick and the wounded. The pretended baggage of this hideous procession consisted of the clothes of the villagers of Swabia, of their beds, gold crosses, shoe-buckles, thefts of every kind committed at country-houses, in churches, monasteries, farms and villages. In vain did Field-Marshal Count *de la Tour* complain; the army of the Directory and their plunder were saved.

Fifteen months after, this grateful Directory sent that *same army* to usurp and to ransack the hospitable land which had been so prodigal of assistance to them.

C H A P. IV.

*Events in 1797 continued. Perseverance of the
Swiss in their System. First Political Hosti-
lities of the Directory.*

THIS picture of faults and of weaknesses leaves without excuse, the ingratitude and violence exercised against free and deceived nations, whose confidence we deplore, while we condemn the error which plunged them into such a course of humiliations. The charm was about to be broken by still greater outrages. It was not too late to recover sound notions of their situation, and to prepare immediately for an eclaiircissement, thenceforth inevitable.

But the delusion changed its appearance, without being removed. There was no leaving the road into which they had precipitated themselves without exposure; was ever party-pride known to confess itself in the wrong? Another system must have annulled the prevailing influence; and the alternative left was to lose their credit or to ruin the State. Besides, Europe was falling in the north and in the south. Some transient changes in the public opinion of the French supported declining hope, and seemed to indicate the the fabulous moderation of the Directory. Thus tossed upon the waves of circumstances, Switzerland without a *constitutional compass* took the course chosen by her pilots,

who were steering her upon rocks : unable to resist them, a minority of senators in vain exhausted their strength to secure the helm ; and the people without foresight, full of confidence in their guides, scarcely suspected either the defect of their plans or their impending danger.

Berne, that had so long set the confederacy an example of vigour, dignity, and adherence to their maxims, now astonished it by her inconstancy. This degeneracy was accelerated by that ascendancy which, in the year 1795, the *French party** acquired in the Sovereign Council.

So far something like a balance had been maintained in it : but the sudden promotion of ninety-two new members at once to that assembly completely turned the scale. This method of filling up the places that had become vacant in the course of ten years by a progressive election, made a sudden alteration of a third of the Council ;

* It was the party itself that took this title. One of its first leaders, Colonel *Weiss*, revealed its secrets in a pamphlet intitled, † *Reveillezz-vous Suisses*, published in January last. "The *Bernese party of neutrality, or French party*," says that writer, "simply loved the French as *our most natural allies*. It applauded their efforts for replacing a bad government by a good one ; it was sorry for their obstacles, rejoiced at their successes, and, in fine, admired their *sublime principles*."

With their admiration, and their friendship for their *natural allies*, the gentlemen did not suspect that those *natural allies*, would one day treat Switzerland as they had done La Vendée. To the invincible folly of that party is owing the calamities that have attended their misconceptions. Many of its adherents were very conscientious in their attachment to that pernicious system.

† *Arouse, ye Swiss nation !*

but it was the rule of the constitution :* in ordinary times there was little inconvenience in a renewal so sudden and numerous ; but in critical and distracted junctures, to introduce at once ninety-two new votes into a deliberative body, was to run a risk of introducing another spirit, of giving an unexpected turn to public affairs, and of setting the inexperience of youth above the maturity of their seniors.

The effects of the election of 1795 were as immediate as fatal. It gave a shock to the Government, weakened the authority of the magistrates, and was the first step to anarchy. Whether it was that the novelties of the day had more charms for the young people, or that their impatience to rule was fomented by circumstances, or whether in fine, enervated by their relish for pleasure, they dreaded to expose their fortunes and enjoyments, the majority of those new-comers ranged themselves under the banners of the *French party*, in which they found flatterers of their indiscretion, and insurers of unalterable peace. Every where, since the storms of the Revolution, youth has given up to age the merit of manhood, of stoicism, and inflexible attachment to public duties.

* The election might begin as soon as there were eighty vacancies, but it was seldom the case before there were ninety or more, in order to satisfy the greater number of candidates. The Sovereign Council was composed of 299 members ; and no one was admissible before he was full nine-and-twenty years old.

On the admission of those novices, all respect for grey hairs was lost; a deluge of motions and speeches overflowed the Grand Council; its new guides paid deference to none. Upon the word of their leaders and on the authority of their knowledge, they pursued the chimera of acquiring the goodwill of the Directory: like the worshippers of malignant deities they prostrated themselves before them, with the offering of their affections, without considering that the only sacrifice that could satisfy them was that of the Constitutions, of the independence, and of the riches of Switzerland.

Buonaparte undertook in Italy to convince them of it: by writing the sentence of neutral States on the ruins of Genoa and Venice, he divulged to Europe the mysteries of the Luxembourg. Such effrontery and perfidy, an hypocrisy so dastardly combined with such bare-faced usurpations, denounced the dissolution of every social system. A revolutionist by constitution, a conqueror by subornation, unjust by instinct, insulting in victory, mercenary in his patronage, an unmerciful plunderer, purchased by the victims whose credulity he betrays, not less terrible by his artifices than by his arms, dishonouring valour by the studied abuse of public faith, crowning immorality with the palms of philosophy, and oppression with the cap of liberty, this lucky Corsican, carrying the torch of *Erostratus* in one hand.

and the fabre of *Genferic** in the other, was laying the plan for burying Switzerland under the rubbish of Italy.

Some disputes between his officers and the Helvetic Governors of the bailiwicks beyond the mountains on the frontiers of the Milanese, caught his attention. He never mentioned the Swiss but with spleen, nor Berne but with rage. More than once, *Haller* the banker, whom he had appointed his commissary of plunder at Milan, had given his countrymen notice of *Buonaparte's* malice. They attempted to pacify this sulphureous spreader of havoc by a deputation, which he at first received very coolly; but to which he listened more favourably after Berne had sacrificed me to his resentment.†

* "Say that Catiline had a strong mind, was he therefore the less a detestable villain? and are we to give to the crimes of a ruffian the colouring of the exploits of a hero?"

J. J. ROUSSEAU *against the Establishment of a Theatre at Geneva.*

"We are to make a great difference between the hero who stains the earth with his blood in defence of his country, and those intrepid ruffians who, on a foreign land, put the innocent and wretched inhabitants to death."

RAYNAL, *Hist. Phil. des deux Indes, Liv. i.*

Such was the language of *Philosophy* before she assumed the revolutionary helmet. In these days the two authorities here cited have no doubt lost their credit.

† In two letters published at Paris in the month of June 1797, I had exposed the imposture of *Buonaparte's* manifestoes against Venice, his wiles in Bergamo, Brescia, and the Veronese, his duplicity, his pillaging, and his ingratitude to two Republics, that from the day he passed the Po had heaped kindnesses upon him and upon his army. On reading this account, which he dared not deny, Buonaparte giving way to his rage, overwhelmed the Deputies from Berne with reproaches for the asylum granted me by their Government. I was immediately denoun-

Although the Deputies at their return had decreased the disquietudes, these constantly assumed a more deadly aspect; all justified the public alarm. The Executive Council of Paris, in order to secure a free course to its tyranny at home and its ravages abroad, had just proscribed the Representatives of the French Republic: a band of servile conspirators, the refuse of the nation, had sold their colleagues, their decrees, France and Europe, to the Directory. The ancient Council of Five Hundred, slowly awaking at the sight of *Baonaparte's* enormities, shewed a desire rather than a design of justice: their first remonstrance cost them their existence: and with those Deputies was buried all hope of peace, of liberty, and public integrity.

This catastrophe brought on that of the Helvetic Body. M. *Barthélemi*, who had changed his house at Basle for the *Directo-*

ced in the Supreme Council, and decreed to banishment by the Privy Council, ruled by the leaders of the French party. This decree was illegal; for as I was a citizen of Geneva, and fellow-townsmen of Berne, I could not be banished from the Canton without being tried; but it will be easily believed that I did not waste my time in applying for favour, or in pleading to a prosecution. Much more affected by the critical situation of Switzerland, than by my own, I did not know to what violence the Government yielded, and with what reluctance Berne fired upon her defender.

When *Baonaparte* was informed of this measure, he thanked the Deputies for it, and appeared for a little while to restore his favour to the Canton, where the promoters of the decree considered it as a stroke of great policy, and congratulated themselves upon having so seasonably divined the passions of the *Hero of the great Nation*: *Héro de la Grande Nation*, laquelle n'est pas une Nation grande.

rial Palace, made his exit with the Representatives of the People; a desert situated under the Line was the reward of his services: *Carnot* followed him into exile: both of them had hitherto averted the blow meditated against Switzerland; that devoted country was left without protectors, and had no farther resources than in its union and its courage.

It was at this period, in the month of September 1797, that the plan of the Directory appears to have been finally settled; but the uncertainty of the negotiations for peace at Campo-Formio, forbade its being suddenly executed. Without regularly opening the trenches, the mines were dug, and preparations made to facilitate the storming of the place.

Above all, the five *Tiberiuses* of Paris were at work for a pretence for invasion, and then to clear the way by revolutionary expedients. Although for a long time they had dispensed with the formality of expostulating before they attacked, and of giving colour to their hostilities by preliminary manifestoes, they constrained themselves to entangle the Swiss in some resolution which they might calumniate, in order to fix on that calumny the pivot of aggression. On the other hand, as dastardly as they were unjust, they did not dare to affront a martial nation when armed, whose resistance might have endangered the expedition and re-kindled a general war.

They set out therefore with ambushes and expedients to dissolve the States internally. To prolong the confidence of the Swiss by pacific protestations, to threaten one particular Canton in order to detach the others from its interests, to divide the members of the League and the councils of each Government, to invest the people with suborners, to answer umbrages with careffes, to instigate innovations that enfeeble authority and concord, to kill Switzerland by her own means, and to crush her as she was expiring, was the subtle detail of instructions given to the Directorial agents : *serpents* preceded tigers, and political poisoners were the advance-guard of their armies.*

Their object was mistaken by the majority. There were no questions here either of removals from office, or of constitutional reforms, or of people, or of liberty. The French took arms to pillage Switzerland, to dissolve its confederacy, to collect its strength and its will in the creatures of the Directory and of the Revolution, to turn its Assembly into a Ministry for the interest of the French Republic, to make Switzerland tributary, the Thirteen Cantons the advanced-post of Franche-Comté, their alliance a durable vassalage, their wealth a capital for the use of the Directory, and their population a tribe for requisitions.

* The tiger crouches before he leaps upon his prey.

Hon. T. Pickering's Report.

The Directory associated two disnaturalized natives of Switzerland in their conspiracy. One was that Lawyer *La Harpe* whom we have already described, a pensioner of the Emperor of Russia, who assumed the title of Colonel for having taught the young Grand Dukes their grammar; he had returned from Petersburg some years before, but being afterwards forced to leave his country on account of his libels against the State, he had gone to plot its ruin in Paris: the other, *Ochs*, the Grand Tribune of Basle, was sent by the Directory in the Autumn of 1797 to be his coadjutor.

The former, who was equally ignorant and passionate, was fit at most to be the demagogue of a village. *Ochs*, more acute, assuming the philosopher, a revolutionary legislator, equally fond of money and power, governed the majority of the Councils of Basle. Loaded with employments by M. *Barthélemi*, and honoured with his confidence, that minister was no sooner condemned than he became his accuser. The Directory, sensible of the merit of this ingratitude, entrusted him with the drawing up of their legislative ordinances for Switzerland, and in the mean time, with the business of inflaming factions.

To bring war and desolation on the country which has nourished us, to be the underling of a foreign usurpation, to give

up one's countrymen to the scourges of a *forced* revolution, and rise upon their dead bodies to the dignity of vicegerent of a *Rew-bell* and of a *Merlin*,* are such crimes as had never yet tarnished the Helvetic history. Yet these are the men whose shameless sacrilege dares to boast of having now revived *William Tell*!

Notwithstanding their labour, their correspondencies, their emissaries, they could collect but a small number of proselytes. In the little towns of the *Pays de Vaud* they could scarcely reckon 250. Basle furnished more accomplices in a populace of usurers, *trimmers*, pragmatic artisans, and fanatics; but I doubt if a complete enumeration would have turned out 6000 favourers of Revolution in all Switzerland. It must be observed further, that very few adhered to the plan of a thorough Revolution, to the idea of sacrificing the respective independence of the Cantons, or to the subversion of the fundamental laws; and almost all held a foreign intervention in horror. Some manufacturing villages on the borders of the lake of Zurich are not included in this computation: in 1795, the Jacobins of France had seduced them into a rebellion, which was suppressed: but they had never ceased to keep up a communication with their seducers: in 1797, money and

* *Ochs* and *La Harpe* are members of the Helvetic Directory by order of the French Government.

instructions were sent to them : they were conspirators ready to receive French troops, and, under their protection, to seize upon Zurich.

It must therefore be considered as an established fact, that the mass of the nation, the great majority of the towns and of the provinces, rejected the project of any Revolution whatsoever. That of France had been at no time more decried in Switzerland ; the public opinion had never been less altered ; the innovators had never been more unprovided with the means of breaking the relations of the Governments and of their subjects, and of inciting the latter to a voluntary insurrection.

To employ open force prematurely, for the purpose of giving the impotence of an obscure and feeble minority the predominance over the general will, was too disadvantageous and hazardous : but although this consideration had at first dictated close measures to the Directory, the petulance of their despotism very soon got the better of their policy : they quickly ceased to qualify the insolence of their conduct : the Helvetic Governments, beset by imperious requisitions, had only to choose between obedience and war ; their legislative independence tottered, and by bearing the first insults offered their sovereignty, they lost the sovereignty itself.

Of these accumulated outrages the most

decisive was the request for dismissing the Minister of his Britannic Majesty. Ever since civilized communities have acknowledged a law of nations, not one among them had ever yet attempted such an outrage. States have been known to send away ambassadors who, having themselves violated the law of nations, had also forfeited its protection ; but to require of an independent State such a contempt for public faith and for an inviolable character, was to usurp for themselves the sovereign authority. Every Power that submits to such presumption is effaced from the number of free Communities.

The Directory took a pride in throwing as much insult into the form as into the requisition itself. Posterity will hardly believe, that at the end of the eighteenth century there was to be found in Europe, a Government so lost to shame as to send such a message by the most abject of underling intriguers. This diplomatic upstart, a native of Upper Alsace, and a relation of *Rewbell's*, was called *Mengaud*.* Formerly employed in commissions of a dark nature, and in revolutionary achievements, joining insolence to the low manners of a recruiter,

* I saw this plenipotentiary arrive at Zurich, accompanied by a German prostitute, whose brother was a waggoner, and who served him as an interpreter. He spent the time he stayed at Zurich with this creature's family, in drunkenness and debauchery. Two months after, in the *official* prints, he entertained the Swiss with his virtue, his manners, his fidelity, and with the respect that was due to him.

he was chosen to notify to the Swiss the will of his masters. No doubt the *Popiliuses*, *Pompeys*, and *Paulus Emiliuses*, who formerly filled analogous departments at the courts of Asia, were more dignified personages ; but the *Great Nation* places its dignity in hooking up ambassadors from the common sewers of its population, and in being represented by men whose character may be the mirror of its manners and government.

Mengaud, it is true, modestly announced himself at first as the courier of the Cabinet. The Directory, who commanded the dismissal of Mr. *Wickham*, did not mean to negotiate the business. Their agent appeared at Berne without any letter for the State ; and his mission was reduced to signifying to the Avoyer the resolution of the Directory decreeing this measure. Berne having replied that it concerned the whole Helvetic Body, *Mengaud* repaired to Zurich, where he made his notification with as little formality. After assuring those two Cantons of the tenderness of the Directory, and of the value they would set upon their obedience, he passed on to Basle, to kindle there the fire of the Helvetic Revolution. In six weeks he was metamorphosed into a Proconsul, and invested with the character of Minister of the French Republic.

If the infatuation of the majority of the Cantons and of the Governments in ascribing some justice to the enemy had been less

invincible, such an indignity would have opened their eyes; but struck with fear, and yet still bewitched with hope, they flattered themselves to escape by temporizing.

The ignominy of violating hospitality, the rights of nations, and gratitude, through regard for the murderers of *Louis XVI.* would have manifested complete impotence and abasement: to refuse doing it was to induce a war. Without waiting for orders from his Court, Mr. *Wickham* had the generosity to relieve the Helvetic Body from their dilemma, by quitting the territory of Switzerland. Convinced of their fast approaching ruin, and unwilling to be made the pretence of their proscription, he consulted the magnanimity of his Sovereign and his own wisdom, rather than a barren point of honour. His Government was far from disapproving his conduct; he declared the sentiments of it in a dispatch addressed from Francfort, November 22, to the Government of Berne, which will remain as a comparative monument of greatness of mind and sensibility in the British nation, and of violence and shame in the worthless successors to the Kings of France.*

Far from laying the storm, this departure of Mr. *Wickham's*, which the Swiss erroneously thought of so much importance, made it break out. To excuse her half-resistance, Berne deputed two members of her Government to Paris, but in vain.

* See the papers printed at the end of this History (A).

This humiliation brought on fresh affronts. Constantly repulsed, and lulled with falsities, the deputies were driven from France: both of them belonged to the party of eternal harmony with the Directory.. If they had discovered their designs, how comes it that their report was not immediately attended with defensive measures? If ignorant of them, could that ignorance have been voluntary?*

However that be, their return was followed by fresh demands; the Cantons now preserved but the shadow of sovereignty, and before the end of November the Directory no longer treated them but as *subjects*, whose docility even could not retard their vengeance..

CHAP. V.

Character of the French Ministers in Switzerland at the End of the Year 1797.—Invasion of Erguel.—Spirit and Conduct of the Helvetic Body at this Crisis.—State of the Pays de Vaud.

THE Agents who composed the Diplomatic Corps of the Directory in Switzer-

* Captain *Moutach* was one of those deputies; he was a vehement young man, the chief orator of his party in the Supreme Council, an honest good citizen, but misled, like so many others, on the subject of the Revolution of France, the Directors and the consequences. Lieut. Col. *Tillier* was his colleague, a man far less pure, but more subtle and more experienced, as will be seen in the sequel of the narrative.

land united characters necessary for the occasion. Those who had been of M. *Barthélemi*'s legation were all recalled, except Citizen *Bacher*, formerly secretary to the embassy under the Monarchy; a man more fervile than mischievous, and less revolutionary, than he was determined at any rate, to preserve the favour of his employers. However, whether it was that they judged him to be too timid, or distrusted his ability, they sent him to Ratisbon at the end of the year 1797: before his departure, he said that the Swiss would *be sorry for it*; a prediction which his immediate successor, Citizen *Mengaud*, did not belie. To the picture we have given of the latter it is enough to add, that he collected about him fellow-labourers, whose minds, morals, and characters corresponded with their common mission.

In the Grisons, France was represented by *Florent Goyot*, a Bourguignon Jacobin and staunch Conventionalist; in the Valois, by one *Mangourit*, who in 1782 was judge of a criminal jurisdiction in the bailiwick of Rennes, and who, having made an attempt upon a young woman who was brought to him as a prisoner to be interrogated, was tried and condemned; his flight, and some protection he received, saved him from the gallows: he re-appeared at Rennes with the Revolution, became one of its

incendiaries, and afterwards an envoy.*

The intention of the Directory being to insult the Swiss till their resentment should furnish them with some pretence for invasion, and to attack them by fire-ships before they attacked them hand-in-hand, it accounts for their choosing three agents, whose characters would justify any infamous act, and whose very appointment was an affront to the Helvetic Body.

These worked in concert upon their respective territories; but the legation at Basle, which was the centre of operations, directed the general movement. In order to train his inexperience, *Mengaud*, at first a commissioner from the Directory, before he assumed his quality of *Chargé d'Affaires*, kept *Bacher* till the middle of December: they prepared the way together for the decisive rupture, by three notifications, as dishonourable for the Swiss as destructive of their safety. By the first they required the remission of the punishment, and immediate recal of the seditious persons and conspirators, who had been banished from the Cantons, since the beginning of the Revolution.

In the second, of the 25th of November, they ordained the immediate and general expulsion of the Emigrants, Priests, and Exiles.; and moreover, that the Members of

* He afterwards supported in Charleston (S. C.) the dignity of the French Republic one and indivisible.

the Legislative Body, and others *condemned* in consequence of the 18th Fructidor, be *delivered up to them, as state criminals, condemned for their offences.*

By the third it was required, that the Swiss officers, who were knights of St. Louis, or of the order of Military Merit, should be deprived of these ornaments. The style of this last note discovered *Mengaud*, hitherto concealed under the signature of *Bacher*. *The Cross-wearers, it said, were connected with the Condéans. Those who suffer those crosses to be worn shall be looked upon as ENCOURAGING CONSPIRACIES, &c.*

The Helvetic Corps in their answers consulted a pusillanimous prudence. The first requisition was eluded rather than rejected; upon the second they recriminated, by demanding that the Directory should likewise deliver up the Swiss Conspirators fled to France: the third was granted; and warriors, honoured by long services, received an order to lay down the ensigns of their valour.*

The success of an outrage like this in a military nation was the height of disgrace and imprudence; but the fatal blindness of

* The French Government had before, in 1794, required of individuals this sacrifice of their honour, by promising pensions to all the renegadoes. Some officers, (there were not a hundred,) and most of those induced by their poverty, sent their crosses and commissions; but the pensions were never paid. By afterwards causing the respective Sovereigns of such officers to order them generally to relinquish their crosses, the Directory were exempted from fixing a price upon this outrage. In this manner does France pay her debts.

the Governments hid from them the inevitable consequence of such forgetfulness of their duty.

The threatening tone of those notes foretold the approach of the armies. The French Directory, after having disgraced Switzerland with their ordinances, were now disgracing her by making her their executioner. They made her at Basle deliver up *Richer-Serisy*, who was flying from transportation, and who, with his papers, was seized in defiance of the rights of nations, in a foreign town, by the Sbirri* of a Government vile enough to repeat a crime of the 16th century: but when the worthless Swiss, who betrayed *Louis le Maure*, as he was leaving Novara in disguise, returned to his country, his treason was punished, and the traitor beheaded.†

The Helvetic Body suffered this violence to pass in silence. The more urgent the danger became, the less did the prevailing party in the principal Governments blush for their baseness and cowardice. All national virtues seemed absorbed. This de-

* Sbirri, among the Italians, are the meanest of the officers of justice, on whom a degree of infamy attaches.

† I am bound in justice to say that before *Richer-Serisy* was delivered up, the Magistrates of Basle gave him notice to leave the town. This notice I repeated to him two days before he was arrested, at the same time offering him a place in my carriage: one of his countrymen and the innkeeper again put him in mind of it. His confidence and his fate got the better of every remonstrance; he thought they would not dare to attack such a man as he.

gradation appeared particularly, when *Buonaparte* was passing through Switzerland on his way to Rastadt. Before he set out from Milan, to the timid complaints of the Grisons upon the incorporation of the Valteline with the Cisalpine Republic, he answered on the 11th November, "The French Republic will grant you its protection, whenever you conduct yourselves towards her with the regard due to the most powerful nation of Europe."

It was not however as a *protector*, but as a morose and malignant sovereign, that he displayed himself in that journey. Every word he uttered was malicious or insulting. At Geneva, he boasted that he would *democratize England in three months*. Berne had prepared him honours, a ball, deputations, and relays,* he rejected all with proud disdain, and passed through without stopping, leaving on his way only marks of ill-humour and contempt. The only persons he thought worthy of his attention were some courtesans and *sans-culottes*, who, in the road to Lausanne, came to present him nosegays and compliments.

However, he came to himself at Basle. An obscure man of the name of *Dufour*, raised to a General, and who commanded at Hunninghen, waited upon him, and addressed him thus: "*I will not compare thee with the Turennes and the Montecucullies, thou*

* *Horses placed on the road to relieve others.*

1 *hast surpassed them ; but I will exclaim with all Republicans, Buonaparte is the first man in the universe."* One Buxtorf, a burgomaster, as great an orator as politician, improved upon Dufour's eloquence. "*The laurel of victory immortalizes the hero,*" said he to the traveller. "*By serving liberty, your beneficence extends that way even to us. It is not admiration alone then that brings us to you, it is gratitude.—You must through Switzerland have read on every countenance the expression of blessings in return for so many cares. At Rastadt you are going to sign the happiness of Switzerland."*

This shocking baseness intoxicated the hero : he sententiously pronounced that there existed but two Republics in Switzerland, and those were Geneva and Basle : the former had neither laws nor government, and the latter was converted into a compting-house and work-shop for the Revolution.

This passage of *Buonaparte's* through the country, which was certainly planned, had a very marked effect : it served as a signal to the innovators and the seditious ; the effervescence of their raptures was a proof of their hopes ; and they partly began to throw off the mask. A cloud of French emissaries immediately poured into Switzerland by every frontier : *Mengaud* and his troop redoubled their activity and their practices ; correspondencies from Basle or from Paris set that little minority of public

disturbers, hitherto timorous and lurking, into a flame ; instigators overran the towns and country places ; clandestine clubs were here and there formed ; the Legation of Basle promised them succours in men and money ; and inflammatory writings in both tongues began to be spread.

The Governments confounded appeared to be struck with mortal pusillanimity. Instead of shutting, without delay, all communication with France, increasing the strictness of their police, and intimidating the wicked, they were still afraid of offending their enemy by preventing their attempts ; talked of the *generosity* of the Directory, wasted the time that was precious in fruitless debates, and did not seem at all to suspect that their ruin was at hand.

In order to prolong this stupefaction, and not belie the preachers of moderation, the Minister *Talleyrand*, avowing *Mengaud* as *Chargé d'Affaires*, acquainted the Helvetic Body on the 16th of December, that the mission of that Envoy *should have no other object than to seize every opportunity of expressing the SINCERE wishes of the Executive Directory for the prosperity of the worthy Helvetic Body*. These assurances were repeated by appointed informers. *Mengaud* himself wrote to the Chancery of Zurich : “ The resolution of the Directory,” says he, “ a copy of which I have the honour to transmit you, forbids me, *who have that of being*

*its agent, all explanation upon the absurd reports of an invasion, and which obtains the success of calumny, only by the good faith of those whom odious motives, aided by the means of perfidy, keep in error.**

The duplicity of *Talleyrand*, the *balderdash* of *Mengaud*, and all those delusions of the little Princes of Italy in the fifteenth century, laid the Cantons asleep till the 15th of December 1797, the day on which the invasion of the Helvetic part of the Bishopric of Basle, by a body of French troops, burst the cloud and flashed lightning on every eye.

It has been already observed that this district, included in the neutrality by an express stipulation on the 27th of August 1792, between the Swiss Deputies and M. *Barthélemi*, ratified by the Convention in the month of November following, was never held of the Germanic Empire as the rest of the Bish-

* At *Mengaud's* instalment into office, he was harangued by General *Dufour*, who said, "Citizen *Mengaud*, the Executive Directory, by appointing thee *Chargé d'Affaires*, were well convinced of thy civism, and we applaud their choice. Banish from thy diplomacy that horrid policy, that subtlety of the cabinets of kings: frankness, honesty, and generosity are the qualities of the Great Nation thou representest." He then talked of *thunder and lightning*, and of the tri-coloured standard. *Mengaud*, grateful, and not behind-hand in sublimity, replied with solemnity, "Thou hast said it, *Dufour*; the Directory, in calling me to the *honourable and delicate post* of THEIR REPRESENTATIVE, thought they recognized in me a thorough-bred civism. In asking the fraternal embrace of thee and the general officers of Hunninghen, I provoke on my part and on theirs the strictest scrutiny of my conduct."

It was in this fine style of the fraternal societies of 1792 that *Mengaud* made the public essay of his talents.

opric was. The city of Bienne, which was a part of it, was a free republic, over which the Bishop was lord paramount, allied to the Helvetic Body, and which sent deputies to the General Diets. Erguel, another portion of this territory, marched under the banners of Bienne, and was dependent on the Protestant Cantons by the guaranty of its religion and privileges. *Neuveville* and *Munster-Thal*, which completed this Helvetic boundary, enjoying the right of citizenship at Berne, depended upon that Canton in spiritual matters, and for the protection of their immunities. In the wars of the Confederacy, this small State furnished its quota to the union, and followed the standard of Berne.

To pretend that the occupancy of lands of the Empire on the left bank of the Rhine gave the occupant a right to seize upon a foreign country, annexed *provisionally* to a German State, was such logic as characterized the French Directory. To break, without any preamble, and by an armed force, the alliance and relations of that country with Switzerland ; to take possession of it as a conquest after having acknowledged its independence, and without consulting either them or their guarantees, and to rob those nations of their privileges, was an usurpation not very consistent with the gospel of the *Rights of Man*, with the ostentation of liberty, with good faith, and their oaths.

Berne, however, still quiet with all this,

was so improvident as to leave that country open which was contiguous to its own territory, and the possession of which opened the defiles of Mount Jura to the French; so that once master of Bienne, the enemy commanded the plains of the Canton, and in one march might sit down before the walls of the capital. I know not whether this fatal error was the effect of bad advice, or of the dread of engaging in a quarrel: be that as it may, the consequences of it could not but strike every body; the Directory had been aware of them all.

This unforeseen invasion was effected by a simple proclamation with which Citizen *Mengaud* commissioned his soldiers, and the language of which, at any other time, would have excited a contemptuous smile; for the burlesque in revolutionary operations is inseparable from atrocity.* When this sudden stroke was accomplished, the French Legation informed the Helvetic Body of the *approaching occupancy* of the invaded countries: if this notification was remarkable for its mockery, it was alarming from the project of plunder it announced, by reserving for the French Republic the *indemnities which were due to her for the non-enjoyment, and, in general, for all the wrongs which had been done to her, to the present time, by the*

* See the paper (B) at the end of this History.

*obstacles thrown in her way in the taking possession of the aforesaid countries.**

This unexpected event was felt throughout Switzerland in general, and made a deep impression in the Canton of Berne : it was a source of regret to the magistrates, and awakened the desire of vengeance in the people : from this moment the illusion vanished, and the nation, undeceived, no longer considering the French but as perfidious enemies, called out to be armed and to drive them away. The more obstinate and protracted the confidence in their promises had been, the more popular and terrible was the resentment against their treachery : but though the zeal of the people was prompt and unlimited, the majority of the Government of Berne dreaded to make use of it. The French troops which had been marched into the western territory of Switzerland did not amount to 8000 men, and without artillery ; their dispositions of defence were yet to be made ; the inhabitants looked upon them with horror ; in eight days time they would have been driven out of the Bishopric of Basle ; an invaluable frontier would have been preserved ; the western borders covered ; a necessary and irrevocable impulse would have been given to the nation ; the seditious would have been daunted ; and

* *Bacher's Letter to the Helvetic Body of the 23d Erimaire, in the year 6. (December 13th, 1797.)*

the French would have been taught how dearly they must have purchased the conquest of the whole of Switzerland.

None of these advantages were overlooked by the Government of Berne ; but, ever behind-hand with events, the temporizing spirits prevailed. Far from giving way to the public sentiment, they confined themselves to vain protestations, and instead of instantly leading their animated troops against the enemy, they suffered them to grow strong, to receive reinforcements, and only extended a *cordon* against them to act on the defensive. The despairing inhabitants of Erguel and of Munster-Thal implored assistance in vain ; their devastation was a lesson to Switzerland of the lot which her *deliverers* were preparing for her. *Imprisonments, insults, rapes, requisitions, and rapine* of all kinds, signalized the arrival of these strangers, whom *Mengaud* had but just announced to their victims *as brothers and friends*, as the protectors of persons and property.

In order to account for the irresolution and delays which cooled the counsels of Berne, it will be necessary to recollect the former view we took of the dissensions with which they were agitated. While a hundred of their members, animated by the ancient national spirit, and by the *Avoyer de Steiguer*, preferred their country to their own preservation, and battles to

the gradual death to which the Republic was tending, the party for prudence did not resign hopes of reconciliation ; and, distrusting the means of resistance, chose rather to glide gently into the Revolution than to render it a bloody one by battles : in this manner did they unite with the French party, who were yet but imperfectly undeceived, for ever promising to disarm the Directory by negociations, too proud to own their faults, committing new ones to justify the old, followed by worthless men, the shield of the intriguers, who, by a mitigated Revolution and show of popular principles, hoped to govern the State under the auspices of France. These parties, divided and opposed, mutually destroyed each other, and their clashing, alternately produced inactivity and half-formed resolutions.

Most of the Helvetic Governments contained the same causes of weakness. The Cantons at a greater distance from the enemy joined but slowly and reluctantly to succour Berne, which did not appear to them so much exposed as to endanger the safety of Switzerland, and require an immediate assistance. How was it possible to unite so many deliberative councils, ever labouring under the weight of inactivity ? And without being sure of their concurrence, how could they devote themselves singly to the general defence ?

Whatever was the force of these objections, it would probably have been overcome, had Berne set the example of an undaunted determination. This impulse so reasonable, followed by success, would soon have roused the whole Confederacy, and put an end to all irresolution: it was begging the question to wait their decisions for fighting, instead of fighting to secure their decisions.

We may imagine, besides, what force so critical a situation must receive from the infernal intrigues of France, her secret promises, and her terrifying threats, her activity in confounding ideas, in veiling her object and her means, and in taking advantage of the minutest circumstances to increase dissension. For example, after the invasion of Munster-Thal and Erguel, she did not blush to report that the treaty of Campo-Formio authorized that measure, as concerted with the Emperor, and that that Monarch aimed at dividing Switzerland. Too many of its inhabitants were weak enough to give credit to this imposture, and to fear Austria still more than the Directory.

This chain of embarrassment with which the Bernese Government found itself fettered, was constantly augmented and made heavier by the disturbances that broke out in some towns of the *Pays de Vaud*. This province, containing about eighty thousand

souls, shared in the general prosperity and allegiance of the Canton. More active, not less brave, nor less loyal, than the German Swiss, its inhabitants were not possessed of their spirit of order, their industry, economy, or temperance : these differences introduced a difference in their respective opulence, which also arose partly from that of their agriculture : the Vaudois are a mixture of the French, whose language they speak, and were not originally united to Switzerland.

However, it would not have been easy to reckon throughout that beautiful country ten thousand persons, who did not idolize the Government of Berne ; certainly not half of that number who were desirous of a change, and scarcely three hundred anxious for peremptory innovations. But the latter, connecting themselves with strangers and ambitious men, strengthened by the protection of the Directory, and influenced by their missionaries, secretly organized themselves. There, as in Ireland, the words *reform* and *representation* masked the plot of rebellion and independence. Although the hopes and secret practices of this despicable gang of beings were public enough, the Government took no notice of them till the resolution of the 7th Nivose, (Dec. 17,) by which the Directory required of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, *an immediate report upon a petition of several*

inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud, tending to obtain, by virtue of ANCIENT TREATIES, the guarantee of the French Republic for the re-establishment of their rights.

We must say a word or two upon that *petition*, those *treaties*, and those *rights*. The *petition* was the fabrication of *La Harpe*, and other exiles; the *treaties* never existed; and the *rights* were imaginary. All this fine diplomatic creation of the Directory and *Talleyrand*, was collected from the libels in which *La Harpe*, forging charters, and building chimeras upon suppositions, had traced the sovereignty of the Pays de Vaud to the pretended ancient States of that province.

Under the Dukes of Savoy it enjoyed an exemption from arbitrary taxation, the privilege of consenting to *extraordinary* subsidies and important immunities. Its States, if very rare and limited meetings can be so called, assembled sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, and always by command of the Prince, who most frequently passed them over, and applied directly and separately to the orders of which they were formed. Their irregular and absolutely feudal formation excluded the whole of the landed part of the nation, who were plunged in slavery. The right of sending members was confined to eight ecclesiastics, twenty nobles, and fourteen towns.

When Berne, in 1536, conquered the Pays de Vaud from the dukes of Savoy, it

was without any capitulation : except some boroughs, which, by submitting voluntarily, obtained the confirmation of their privileges, the rest of the province belonged to the conqueror unconditionally. Berne, however, had the generosity to allow it its liberties, and to support its customs ; she even extended the benefit of them to such of the communities as had not enjoyed them ; she enfranchised the landed part, and exempted it from arbitrary taxes ; in the room of the courts of the Prince and of the Lords, she substituted popular jurisdictions. No Corporation thought of calling for the States : every year the Supreme Council of Berne, and the Bailiffs on going into office, took a solemn oath to maintain the liberties of the Pays de Vaud ; an oath that had never been violated. If those obscure States were forgotten, the Vaudois ought to have blessed the motive of their oblivion, as the object of those assemblies was lost from their not being burdened with taxes.

It was nevertheless this feudal institution, the rights and jurisdiction of which were not settled by any known law or prescription, which had, in fact, been abolished by the very nature of things, and which was incompatible with the existing state of the country ; it was this institution that the levellers of Paris set themselves up to restore. As for the *treaties of guaranty*, upon

which they rested their intervention, that bold fiction was built upon a very original hypothesis. The Directory pretended that the conquest of Savoy transmitted to them the rights of the ancient Dukes, and that as they, when the Pays de Vaud was ceded, had guaranteed the privileges and the States of that province, France ought now to perform the guaranty, forgotten for two centuries. What shall we think of the jurists of the Luxembourg, when we learn that neither the treaty of Lausanne in 1564, by which Duke *Emanuel Philibert* ceded for ever the Pays de Vaud, nor any of the treaties of that House with the Canton of Berne, contain a single word about that guarantee, those States, or the engagement to maintain them?

This kind of logic was a sufficient proof that open violence would soon be the Directory's most authentic law of nations. If Berne had assembled the States of the Pays de Vaud in their ancient form, another representation would have been demanded, which would have led to anarchy, and anarchy to independence, stirred up and supported by the French.

Notwithstanding the evidence of these immediate transitions, several flattered themselves to settle the difference, by proposing concessions to the Pays de Vaud: others perceived in that condescension measures for attaching the province more strongly to

them ; these opinions were debated, which was so much time thrown away, for the convocation of the States was, not the end, but the means of the Directory and their auxiliaries ; who were pushing on to a complete Revolution. The more submissive had Berne shewn herself, the more would they have required of her, and, till their final aim had been accomplished, they would have scouted advances, and rejected all conciliation.

In this confusion of opinions, and amid their perplexities, the Government still struggled with the necessity of proceeding to a rupture. They every day, with the news of a progressive fermentation among the rebels, received testimonies of the greatest loyalty, and the most urgent solicitations from the great and faithful majority, conjuring them to be resolute and to display their power. At length the Supreme Council decreed to send a Senatorial commission to Lausanne, to make themselves acquainted with the public mind and restore tranquillity.

Unfortunately this deputation was composed of men, most of whom, though very respectable, did not possess dignity and firmness. By shewing more fear than power, they discouraged the steady inhabitants, chilled the weak and irresolute, and emboldened the seditious. The majority of the commissioners seemed ignorant of this truth ;

they appeared unarmed in a town which they ought instantly to have awed ; they did not dare to break up the clubs of conspirators which were formed in it ; they even submitted to insults ; they invited opposition by their timidity, and instead of arresting some hundreds of the promoters of disturbance, they resigned themselves to persuasive measures, and pallied the zeal they met with in the generality of the Vaudois. The inhabitants in bodies, and individually, expressed their solemn wish to remain under the sovereignty of Berne, and to take arms against all revolution that should be instigated by foreigners.

Less encouraged by this public ardour, than alarmed at the pretensions of a small number, and at the insolence of some factious men, the commissioners, participating of the fluctuations of the Government, seemed to dread offending France and her creatures ; but it was not long before they learnt the reward of all this caution, from the second resolution adopted by the Directory, the 8th Nivose, (Dec. 28) upon the report of *Talleyrand*.*

In that decision it was no longer a sover-

* Resolution of the 8th Nivose, anno 6. " The Executive Directory resolve, that it shall be declared to the Governments of Berne and of Fribourg, that the members of those Governments *shall answer personally* for the safety of the persons and property of the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud, who have applied, or may yet apply, to the French Republic to request, *by virtue of the ancient treaties, her mediation*, for the purpose of being maintained, or reinstated, in their rights."

eign State speaking of a sovereign State ; the Luxembourg had become a criminal court, where the assistant judges were passing sentence for the Swiss Magistrates. By this expedient of *terrorism*, the Directory absolved the subjects of Berne and Fribourg from their allegiance, dissolved those two Governments, gave the signal of rebellion against their authority, and by threatening the Magistrates personally, still farther enervated their volition of resistance.

Never was there a more positive declaration of war ; but the Governments, though one and all affected with their danger, were far from being agreed, on the measures proper for their preservation : they thought of calming, when they should have thought of rousing ; endeavoured to find evasions for a bare-faced aggression, and wasted the time in deliberations and conferences.

At length, informed of the danger of Berne and Fribourg, the principal States of the Helvetic League sent federal deputies to the former city, to assist the Republic with their counsels, declare the union, and consider what was advisable on the occasion. It was resolved, at the same time, to open an extraordinary Diet at Arau. This multiplicity of tardy consultations suspended all active resolution : some of the federal deputies, who had assembled at Berne, repaired to the *Pays de Vaud*, where they preached to the seditious without either convincing,

curbing, or threatening them. This concurrence of mischievous palliatives, these impotent attempts, charged fear with unavoidable extremities; and *the usual effect of all this advice was to view all the disorders without remedying any.*

De tous ces conseils l'effet le plus commun
Fut de voir tous le maux sans en guérir aucun;

CHAP. VI.

Revolution of the Pays de Vaud.—Its Causes and Progress.—Entry of the French into that Province.—General Diet.

WAS all this hesitation and doubt, this extraordinary adherence to measures so vague, while the intentions of the enemy were so clear, the effect of weakness, and the want of power?—No: Switzerland possessed a nation of soldiers, a number of skilful officers, arsenals, and formidable posts. Berne alone turned out 35,000 men, embodied, disciplined, and brave; her magazines were well stored; her treasury was equal to the support of the army for several months: those forces might have been doubled by succours from the League; and had they been worsted in battle, their impenetrable retreats would have provided them with new means of resist-

ance. Germany would have furnished corn ; sure subsidies would have helped to support the war : the Germanic Empire would have been enforced, and it would have been the interest of the Emperor to succour an invaluable neighbour against the enemies of his glory, of his tranquillity, and his crown : this atrocious aggression, repulsed in a desperate manner, would perhaps have roused all Europe : the first advantage obtained by the Swiss would have laid open to them a frontier without a fortress ; at every step they took into the contiguous departments of France, they would have met men hating their oppressors, anxious to be delivered from them, and remembering their wrongs ; from Besançon to Lyons, and from Lyons to the Mediterranean, they would have lighted a flame more terrible than that of Vendée.

This view of resources was presented, but without success ; the majority of the Governments were less seeking the means of supporting war than the means of avoiding it. Two fatal opinions conspired thus to fix the character of the Councils.

The first, which was built upon the insuperable hope of preventing a rupture, opposed energetic measures as so many obstacles to that desirable object, continued to confide in pleadings and negotiations, and, in order to preserve peace, advised the submitting to all previous wrongs. The sup-

porters of this system thought it enough to answer hostilities with arguments, and to discuss the cause before it was defended. It was in this spirit that pamphlets and apologies, setting forth the friendly conduct of Switzerland, and her compliances of every kind towards France, were written. It may be easily imagined how little those humble narratives affected the Directory, who were but the more convinced, by so many proofs of weakness, that they might attack the Swiss with impunity.

The second opinion which enervated the Councils, consisted in the idea, that as a Revolution was inevitable, it was better that they should themselves anticipate the Directory, keep off their soldiers by adopting their doctrines, abdicate the Sovereignty, assemble the whole nation, and deliberate on the subject at large. According to the promoters of this spontaneous subversion, they were in the wrong to distrust the rectitude of the French Government, whose intentions went no farther than a popular reform.

To dissolve the State at the moment of an invasion ; to precipitate themselves into a Revolution, without fixing the bounds, or knowing how they were to stop the course of it ; to call the People to the Councils, when those Councils themselves had desired a reduction ; to institute a new system amidst such confusion ; and, lastly, to

rely upon the peaceable approbation of the Directory to innovations which could not accomplish their views by a thorough overthrow of every thing, were measures not consistent either with reason or with experience. Indeed experience had shewn that there was no compounding with the French Republic, that its Revolution was still more *indivisible* than its territory, and that it no more gave other nations the liberty of preserving their laws, than the liberty of reforming them temperately.

This strange reckoning, however, was agreeable to that class of people who every where inclined to quiet, and who thought themselves saved, provided their ruin approached without violent shocks. Another class, not less indifferent about duties than troubled with foresight, also embraced a half Revolution as a port against the armies, and against the spoliations and assassinations of Jacobinism. Both one and the other were contriving how to save their lives and fortunes, without thinking of saving the State. These dupes were joined by a species of secret conspirators, who, as we have observed, had placed the corner-stone of their personal power and popularity upon innovations.

While these interests and dissensions rendered the deliberations ineffectual, they learned that the Directory, putting an end to the war of *resolutions*, (*arrêtés*,) were

marching an army of 15,000 men, drawn from Italy and commanded by General *Ménard*, towards Geneva. This movement completed the plan of the French Government, who, after having by public decrees excited the effervescence of the Vaudois Revolutionists, were now coming to support their petitions sword in hand.

Those petitions, the immediate result of *Talleyrand's* report and the resolution of the 28th of December, were few in number, and not uniform in tenor ; the greater part desired a restoration of the Ancient States, that pretext of the factious : at Lausanne, the chief town, the petition could obtain but 130 signatures, and even many of those were from strangers and unknown persons. Yverdon, the second town of the country, disavowed that which had been ascribed to it, and protested without reserve against innovations. In the country places the people unanimously refused to join in those petitions, and confined themselves to respectful applications upon the redemption of the feudal rights.

The suborned authors of the petitions could never prevail so far as to have them addressed to the Directory : they were all sent to Berne, and submitted to the decision of the Government.

This general reprobation of Revolutionary attempts, the approach of a body of troops to support them by force, the pre-

fence of the General Diet, their first arrangements, and the evidence of danger, determined the Government to adopt a powerful and bold measure. On the 5th of January 1798, the Supreme Council decreed, that the Pays de Vaud should, on the 10th, under arms, renew the oath of allegiance. In the proclamation published the same day to that effect, the Republic thus addressed the Vaudois :—" We assemble you, that you may declare your general wish, and take with us the solemn oath which unites us. We declare to you our firm and unalterable resolution to employ, with the assistance of the Almighty, all the means that are in our power to preserve you, your wives, your children, and properties, from the innumerable evils of disorder and anarchy."

As soon as this resolution was known, the French agents and their accomplices redoubled their intrigues, libels, and calumnies; and threatened those who should attend to take the proposed oath, with the resentment of the Directory. This noble act of confidence was nevertheless crowned with success. The whole militia of the Pays de Vaud being assembled at their colours in their respective departments, the Bernese commissioners charged with the ceremony, swore to protect, to succour, to redress abuses, and *to do for the happiness of the country whatever could satisfy every free*

man who wished only for the prosperity of his country. Out of thirty battalions forming the militia, twenty-four took the oath without hesitation or reserve; the other six, influenced by some treacherous officers, appearing to pause, the commissioners, instead of enforcing it by authority, or by persuasion, dispensed with their oaths: a little after, a part of them of their own accord returned to their duty and loyalty.

Could there be a more august or affecting ceremony to attest the union of the Government and the Nation? It gave the lie to the tales of the Directory; it reduced them to the visible absurdity of effecting a Revolution by force, which they had preached up as solicited; it proved in what consisted that French *generosity*, which was ready to pierce the heart of whoever refused it a rebellion. Thenceforth the national sentiment was undeniably proved, and taught the Government their duty and their resources. The seditious, daunted, trembled before those corps of militia who called for their punishment, and their insolence was succeeded by a mean timidity. Of what avail was their servile obedience to detested foreigners, against the patriotic affections of twenty thousand determined and religious citizens, who had just sworn before God to die for their laws and their country?

By an unaccountable fatality, or rather

by the effect of that divided spirit which distracted the Government, this emotion was allowed to subside : from the show of firmness they relapsed to the demonstrations of fear ; from one day of vigour into weeks of languor. The commission at Lausanne, which was still in being, instead of assembling the animated troops without delay, making examples, securing the frontier, and seconding the well-affected citizens, remained irresolute and inactive : they would not yet think themselves in a state of war, and studied to avoid whatever might give umbrage to the Directory. In this deplorable illusion, they went so far as to dismantle the alarm-signals, to withdraw the military *cordon* from the southern frontier, and to depute a superior officer to the French commander in Savoy, to inquire for what purpose the troops were assembling !

This mispent commission was at length recalled ; and before its departure saw the first sparks of an insurrection which its timidity and irresolution had promoted, amidst infinite means of preventing it. Some rebels of the little town of Vevay, emboldened by the inactivity of the Government and by the approach of French succours, surprised the Bailiff of ~~their district~~ into giving an order for delivering up to them the Castle of Chillon, situated near the eastern extremity of the Lake of Geneva, and defended by some militia : other

commotions broke out in the South ; no attempts were made to suppress them ; there was no longer any police ; the majority of the inhabitants saw with indignation that they were on the eve of being sacrificed to a handful of vagabonds.

Meanwhile, however, the Government perceived that, if these scruples were longer continued, they should lose the Pays de Vaud. In consequence they collected a body of troops, ordered those of the Pays de Vaud to join it, and gave the command of the army in that province to Baron *d'Erlach de Spietz*, a Counsellor of State, one of the Commissioners at Lausanne. From his knowledge of the country, his reputation, the opinion entertained of his firmness and abilities, nobody was more proper than that magistrate to justify the public confidence ; but for reasons, which I never knew, he refused the appointment, and returned to Berne with the other Commissioners.

His refusal could not be too much regretted ; it became a calamity from the choice that was made to supply his place. Party views and paltry considerations caused the command to be given to that Colonel *Weiss* who has been already described in a former page of this History.

This officer has been painted under the characters of a traitor, a Jacobin, and a coward ; but he did not deserve any of

those titles. His personal bravery had been proved; he had successively courted the different systems of the French Revolution, without making himself of consequence in any: all the heads of that vast butchery, in their turns, had had his homage and congratulations: it was enough to speak of a man high in the world for Colonel *Weiss* to become his partisan: *Cesar* or *Buonaparte*, it would have been all one to him; he would have corresponded with the former as with the latter: he never troubled his head about the personal merit or demerit of a man: for it is enough to be famous to kindle the enthusiasm of him who aspires to be so. Amidst these irregularities of a mind intoxicated by paradoxes, and spoilt by the modern philosophy as well as by licentious habits, Mr. *Weiss* loved his country, and never dreamt of subverting the constitution of it. These sentiments had lost him the confidence of the Directory and of the Swiss Revolutionists, who accused him of hypocrisy. Nobody less merited that reproach; for vanity and desire of praise are not the foil of dissimulation. No presumption was ever more open than that of Mr. *Weiss*; but such was the oddity of his understanding, that while he admired the Revolution in France, he thought it pernicious in Switzerland.

Without military talents, without political abilities, devoid of coolness and of con-

duct, and presumptuous in proportion to his mediocrity, he repaired to Laufanne, persuaded that the influence of his name, of his pamphlets, and of his philosophy, would reduce the rebels without a sword being drawn. Placed between his duty and the fear of losing his popularity, he rendered himself unpopular without performing his duty. It is ever thus with those who quit the line of rectitude.

He received full powers from the Government, with peremptory orders to proceed without delay and assemble troops enough to maintain internal tranquillity, and prevent the French from entering the Pays de Vaud. Twenty thousand men, plenty of artillery, and a considerable quantity of provisions, were at his disposal. More than sixty thousand loyal inhabitants were waiting with impatience for his first movements. What did this strange General do? He remained a whole week inactive, and not only suffered a debating revolutionary committee to be in the place where he was, but instead of routing them and seizing the members, he commenced a war with them of insipid prating and altercation. Finding their audacity unpunished, they formed a project of seizing upon the Castle of Laufanne: upon which Colonel *Weiss* civilly informed them that *that crime would be an act of high treason, for which they should answer with their heads.* In his opinion, it was not

the plot, but the execution of it which formed the crime ; and, as if he had been afraid of intimidating them too much, he further says to them : “ That step, gentlemen, would be of no importance to your interests ; and under the point of view of egotism alone, it would be in no equilibrium with the consequences which might result from it. I invite you *very amicably* to judge of me by my *known principles*, and a long series of conduct, which has *merited me the confidence of different parties*, and even *the distinguishing favour of the external authority* whose support you are now seeking.”

Is it wonderful that the preaching General, who, in so critical a circumstance, exercised his power in gibberish like this, should have found himself accused of treason ? Is it wonderful that on hearing such language, the well-disposed people should have thought themselves betrayed and lost, and that the rebels should have no longer observed any respect ? The public entreaties, the care of his fame, the danger of the crisis, the proof of the object, nothing made Colonel *Weiss* stir. He did not even attempt to recover the Castle of Chillon. Before his eyes, the fire of the Revolution was publicly kindled, and the committee, who were blowing it into a blaze, performed their work by the General's side, and in competition with him. The faithful inhabitants, confounded at his conduct, gave themselves

up to despair ; and while they wearied both the commander and the Government with their complaints, the conspirators barefacedly deputed agents to General *Menard*, whose head-quarters were at Ferney, in that mansion where Voltaire had sung Helvetic liberty.*

This step was long opposed by a party of the Revolutionists of Lausanne, who were hurried away by their leaders ; the greater part of the factious, who were spread over the rest of the country, knew nothing of it ; and I affirm, that generally they were more afraid of the arrival of the French than of the vengeance of the Bernese. The idea of a decisive separation formed no part of their wishes or of their measures.

Colonel *Weiss* did not discern this disposition. Dismayed between the approaching French, whom he did not wish to fight, and the seditious, whom he did not dare to chastise, he abandoned the theatre of his follies, and took shelter at Yverdon, near the Lake of Neufchatel, where he established his head-quarters.

This desertion could not but decide the fate of the Pays de Vaud ; the majority of its inhabitants, thus cruelly forsaken, no longer thought of resisting, as the Government itself did not resist ; all authority van-

* At the head of this deputation was one *De Saugy*, who had been formerly employed, like *La Harpe*, as a private tutor at Petersburg, and who was a knight of St. Wolodimir.

ished to make way for that of the French arms, and of those who called them in.

The division under the command of *Menard* did not amount to 15,000 effective men. Those conquerors, whose rich leaders had ravished from Italy spoils of all kinds to the amount of four hundred million, arrived in rags. To those who were astonished at their nakedness they said, *the Swiss will clothe us*. This army, without magazines, subsistence, or artillery, marched to the frontier of the Pays de Gex, and passed it, notwithstanding the word of the General, upon which Berne had been simple enough to rely.

Posted at first between the Lake and Mount Jura, *Menard* proclaimed that the moment a Bernese force should appear, he would disarm and ravage all the villages about. At sight of his colours the insurrection broke out; the Bailiffs without arms abandoned their castles to the invasion and pillage of the Vaudois Jacobins: the public banks were seized, the public carriages stopt, the green cockade displayed, and the tree of liberty planted. Lausanne, become the centre of the hurricane, seized the helm, which was governed by a Provisional Assembly. These different *coups-de-main*, previously concerted, were the execution of a plan ready laid, sent from Paris, and completed on the 24th of January.

Menard, being a second time solemnly

invited, marched his columns without delay into the interior of the country, amidst the acclamations of a band of rebels and public consternation. Here a fresh example was given of the habitual hypocrisy and shamelessness of the French Government.

To rid themselves of the assurances with which they had lulled the Bernese, and to colour a premeditated invasion by an accidental pretext, they caused a scene to be played that would have disgraced the most despicable *Condottieri*.* When he was passing the boundary, *Menard* dispatched one of his aid-de-camps, attended by two hussars, to Colonel *Weiss*, who was still at Yverdun: on their return, those envoys passed in the night-time through the village of Thiérens, whose inhabitants had opposed the Revolutionists, and being threatened by them with firing the place, had stationed patrols about their houses. On being accosted by two sentinels, the French hussars made blows at them with their sabres, wounded, and would have killed them, had not one of the sentinels shot the first assailant, and disarmed the other. This incident, attested by a minute taken on the occasion, by a multiplicity of proofs, and an immediate inquiry, became, under *Menard's* pen, an unheard-of outrage of the satellites of oligarchy, of wretches who dared to vio-

* *Condottieri* are persons that have the charge of public carriages and barges.

late the most sacred rights, monsters of assassins, guilty of a horrible crime, of which the French soldiers could not remain indifferent spectators.

"No," added this abominable sycophant, "the Great Nation never compounds a crime; its authors cannot escape our just vengeance."*

This acted rage, this mountebank language, this juggle of bullies, was immediately laid hold of by the Directory, who, delighted with the episode, transmitted it to the Legislative Body as the text of a rupture, as the just grounds of an invasion. Berne had so little respect for herself, as to send a submissive disavowal of these offences to Paris, to deliver up the trusty sentinels of Thiérens to *Menard*, and to suffer the Vaudois Revolutionists to come, and, within sight of her army, reduce this unfortunate village to ashes.

After the multitude of similar incidents which have signalized all the conquests, all the acts, all the negociations, of the French Republic, what madness could yet support the hope of bringing her back to justice? What State will flatter itself that it can remain tranquil on the politics of men so base and so perverted?

Yet, terrified by the French menaces, by the unhappy adventure at Thiérens, and by his past errors, Colonel *Weiss* completed the

* Proclamations de *Philip Romain Ménard* à ses Soldats et au Peuple Vaudois, des 8 & 9 Pluviose (27 and 28 January.).

whole by deserting his post at Yverdun without orders. A Bernese Deputy, worthy of his country and of his ancestors, M. *Tscharner* of St. John, met him and his attendants in their retreat, at the moment when he was carrying fresh instructions to him, and an assurance to the brave inhabitants of that part of the province that they should not be deserted. Thus, without spilling a drop of blood, did this General, in a fortnight, lose the Pays de Vaud, twenty thousand men eager to fight, every kind of moral resources, and the respect due to his Government. *May these examples teach every State, that in the present times their greatest danger lies in trusting their defence to agents, whose sentiments and opinions are destitute of that energetic purity which may even supply the place of talents, but, the want of which, talents cannot supply ! ! ! **

While the Revolution was going on in the south of Switzerland, the extraordinary Diet convened in the middle of December, resolved, after a series of laborious deliberations, that the alliance and federal oath among the States of the Helvetic Body should be renewed. Basle alone, under subjection to the French, and the influence of their Jacobins, resisted this striking measure, which seemed to give each member of

* Colonel *Weiss*, on his return to Berne, lost all kind of credit, and sunk into obscurity. Disgraced with all parties, he emigrated to Austria after the ruin of the Republic.

the union the certainty of the whole being devoted to the common interest.

The solemn ceremony of the oath was performed at Aura on the 25th of January, at the very time when the French cockade was mixing with that of the Vaudois Revolutionists. The solemnity was preceded by a manly speech from M. Wyss, a burgo-master of Zurich. "*The three heroes of Schweitz, Uri, and Unterwalden,*" said that Magistrate, "*confederated, in the presence of God, to obtain liberty for themselves and their fellow-citizens : what they swore they effected ; and they, their brothers, and their sons, saw their struggles for freedom crowned by brilliant victories. We, their descendants, have enjoyed the happy fruits of that confederation, and peace and liberty beyond any other people. The same blessings will continue to make our country flourish, provided the ties which render it a nation of brothers be firmly preserved among us.*"

After praying to the Almighty to bless this religious and patriotic act, each Envoy swore in the name of his respective State, "*ever to observe and maintain firm and inviolable all alliances and leagues ; as well as to maintain and protect one another reciprocally in their alliances and constitutions.*"

This august consecration, which put Switzerland in mind of the brilliant days of her history, seemed to call the martyrs of her liberty from the grave, and for an instant raised her spirits : but soon plunged again

into their doubts upon events, and into apprehensions of their result, the Diet displayed only irresolution: the ceremony of the oath was *but* a ceremony, and each Canton undecided, put off, from day to day, the execution of this grand engagement.

During these endless deliberations, the French Legation were spreading abundance of their inflammatory matter. Before his departure for Paris, *Ochs*, who was suspected of having concerted the plan of insurrection and attack with *Buonaparte*, charged his accomplices to second *Mengaud*. On the 1st of January those wretches, among whom were seen *Huber* an apothecary, *Flick* the bookseller, one *Erlacher* an upholsterer of Aaristorf, collected the incendiaries, exiles, and bankrupts of the different Cantons together at a frantic revel. The associates prepared their parts, settled the plan of the Revolution of Basle, and of betraying the whole of Switzerland.

They set their comrades and correspondents in motion at Soleure, in Argovia, and on the borders of the Lake of Zurich. A rapid dispersion of emissaries and of pamphlets raised the fire of rebellion. Here the timorous innovators were threatened with the vengeance of France, there the ambitious were promised dignities, and the fanatics heated by chimeras: markets for corruption were opened; crimes were purchased; every base and criminal passion

was taken into pay ; and points of intelligence and communication were established.

To push on the disorder, *Mengaud* himself, escorted by six hussars, repaired to Arau, where the Diet was sitting. There he hoisted the tri-coloured flag. In presence of that Assembly, whom he harassed with his *hectorings* and notifications, he arranged in person the revolt of the inhabitants. In his perpetual journeys from Arau to Bâle, he strewed the road with libels, mixed suborners with the troops, got drunk with the rabble, lavished caresses and intimidations ; and, by giving insults, provoked some against himself or against the banditti in his train, for the purpose of turning them into grounds for hostilities.

Corresponding with all the traitors of the country, he included them in his impunity, and under the shelter of his quality. Towards the end of December, Berne having at last arrested some preachers of sedition, and, among others, two persons convicted of attempting to dissuade their village from their military duty, *Mengaud* demanded these prisoners, and wrote thus to the State on the 2d of January : “ I do not know of what outrage you suppose them guilty ; but to this day *same informs me* that all their crime *is their opinion*, that all their outrages are their *sentiments of regard for the French*. I cannot remain an indifferent spectator to a conduct so injurious to the French Gov-

ernment. It is that which you seem to prosecute ; it is that which you strike, in those who dare to call themselves its friends ; and it is that which I must defend in their persons, by placing their lives and safety *under your direct responsibility.*"*

Thus, a sovereign State could not in its own dominions exercise its police, or try criminals, without the consent of a French adventurer and his despotic employers : thus Switzerland found herself under the necessity of releasing persons guilty of high treason, or of committing an offence in punishing them against the French Republic, which, both judge and party, put the Cantons to the alternative of tolerating an insurrection fomented by France, or of being assailed by her armies. Berne, roused to indignation, replied three days after : " No person has been either committed or punished for simple opinions. We are accountable for our actions only to our consciences, our laws, our constitution, and to God, who is above all."†

Mengaud did not long delay retorting to this answer : on the 6th of January he writes thus : " Justly provoked by your arbitrary acts, the Directory charge me to declare to you, that all the members of your Government shall be *personally* responsible

* Lettre de *Mengaud* du 13 Nivose.

† Lettre du Conseil de Berne au Citoyen *Mengaud* du 5 Janvier, 1798.

to them for the individual safety and property of the inhabitants, who are the objects of *your* persecution and of *their* good-will.”*

The Council of Berne passed this second letter over in silence. It was expected that the criminals would be sent to the scaffold without delay ; the public demanded this example ; and it was time to answer terror by terror. But must I say it ? In this perpetual struggle between weakness and firmness, the latter was generally worsted : no sooner was a strong measure decreed by the transient superiority of one party, than it was rendered ineffectual by the other. This mutability was strengthened by the impression that the responsibility with which *Mengaud* had dared to threaten the magistracy left on weak minds.

Overwhelmed with the addresses and abusive notes of this buffoon, the Government now found themselves called upon to give an account of the assembling of their troops, by that Directory who, while they were surrounding the Canton with five-and-twenty thousand soldiers, and giving orders for as many more to reinforce those, pretended to be surprised and hurt at the defensive measures which Berne was taking.

All these official insults, which were immediately made public, the discredit they threw upon the tottering Government, who endeavoured to conceal the enormity of

* Autre lettre de *Mengaud* du 17 Nivose.

them, the impunity of the incendiaries and conspirators, together with the subornations and practices of the French agents, filled the measure of internal danger. The minority of the Revolutionists, more enterprising, began to take the upper hand in several places. The town of Arau, the centre of *Mengaud's* operations, or rather a pack of vagabonds joined by some manufacturers and their clubs, set up the standard of rebellion. The Diet had scarcely left the place in the end of January, when that Municipality declared itself independent, and erected the tree of liberty. The regiment of militia belonging to Arberg, a town near Arau, revolted against their officers, formed a committee, and had nearly seized the fort. The officers of the regiment of Zoffingur refused the service and were all broken. A battalion of the town of Leutzbourg declared that they would not march against Arau; and the greater part of the dragoons of those bailiwicks followed the example of disobedience.

In this crisis there was nothing more to be done but to give up and be wrecked, or to save the vessel by suddenly pushing her forward. The many disastrous events to which the system of the conciliators had given birth, having for a moment lowered their credit, the Councils once more felt the spur of vigour.

From prompt measures that were taken,

the mislaid battalions returned to their duty: the Argovia militia, who had never swerved from theirs, awed the towns, and marched to Arau. Two firm Patricians, the Commissary-General *Wyss*, and Colonel *de Watteville* of Konitz, entered it by force, seized the ringleaders of the insurrection, and quieted the whole province. Strict measures of police and vigilance superseded inactivity, and were seconded by the troops and by the people. The ragings of *Mengaud* were despised, and his communications cut off. The rebels, disconcerted and pursued, fled to Basle: the public resentment broke out against their accomplices, who narrowly escaped being massacred by the country-people at Arau and at Olten. The zeal of their subjects re-animating the courage of the Government, a generous and unanimous determination took the place of doubt and despondency; to the continuance of this ardour the public safety was associated, and every true patriot once more felt his heart glowing with hope.

C H A P. VII.

Situation of the Canton of Berne, and of Switzerland in the beginning of February. First Revolution in the Governments. Negotiations with General Brune and their Consequences.

IN the beginning of February the affairs of the State had no longer that gloomy appearance which they had worn the month before. The renewal of the federal alliances gave assurance that France would have to attack Switzerland entire. Before they dissolved themselves, the Diet had decreed a levy of double the quota stipulated by the former treaties of union ; these forces together formed an army of 26,800 men. The respective Cantons set about assembling them. The Helvetic Deputies, remaining at Berne, in some measure kept up the Diet, and manifested a general harmony. They familiarized themselves to the thoughts of an inevitable war, and the people and militia were eager for battle. Full of enthusiasm in their cause, of confidence in their leaders, of love for their laws, of hope in their arms, they considered themselves as protected by Providence : a religious ardour mingled with that of patriotism and the feelings of honour. What might not have been done with such men, men animated with such passions !

The loss of the Pays de Vaud was not an irretrievable misfortune : it curtailed Berne indeed of eight regiments, but many chances were in favour of recovering them, and the province itself : in its eastern extremity there were nineteen great associations bordering the west of Franche Comté and the principality of Neufchatel, united, armed, and fortified in their mountains, who were still defending their liberty, and looking up to the Government. The presence of the French excited disgust in the people, and terrified the moderate Revolutionists.

The first step *Menard* took was to raise a contribution. This generous deliverer began with an extortion from his new allies : he demanded a tribute of 700,000 livres ; for it was necessary to feed his soldiers, and cover their nakedness. Assuming the disposal of their lives as well as of their purses, he gave orders for a levy of 4000 volunteers, to guard the towns in his absence ; but the provisional Commission of Lausanne, with all the efforts of their civism, could not get a hundred of them together : it was attempted to effect this requisition by force, and the consequence was resistance and imprisonment.

The French forces in the Pays de Vaud did not amount to more than 12,000 men ; the generality of the inhabitants only waited for a movement of Berne to begin to act ; and even this their zeal outran : ev-

every day soldiers from the militia joined the Bernese army ; these were incorporated into a regiment, formed and commanded by Colonel *de Roverea*,* under the name of *the Faithful Legion*. In Erguel there were not above 10,000 of the enemy : thirty-one Bernese battalions, making 20,000 effective men, were already assembled ; twenty-eight battalions of *Pepinière* (*Stam bataillons*.) and the remaining mass of the inhabitants, might have doubled this army : an immediate attack on *Ménard* would probably have recovered all the Vaudois regiments : the first fortunate engagement would have removed the difficulties which in the other Cantons delayed the arming of their quotas ; and lastly, far from being infected with the revolutionary pestilence, the associations vied in protesting their attachment to the Constitution, and to the Magistrates, in the most affecting and energetic addresses.

This concurrence of circumstances produced no effect : inflexible in their fear and illusions, the majority of the Government were again influenced by the two springs of their conduct, the prepossession that all resistance was useless, and the blind hope of conciliating the Directory by popular innovations in the Constitution.

* This brave and well-informed officer had before, in 1792, given proofs of his zeal, knowledge, and abilities. He thinks and feels forcibly, and will, no doubt, some day be one of the deliverers of his country, which he defended to the last moment.

In consequence, without any demand having been made for it by any part of the people, and in spite of the representations of the confederate Magistrates, the Supreme Council had decreed in the latter end of January to add to themselves a general deputation of the communes and towns. In many places the people would not believe the order of convocation, and did not conceal their repugnance to all innovation. On the 31st of January the whole of the militia appointed fifty-two deputies, who, on the 2d of February following, took their seats in the Supreme Council. The elections in the country had generally fallen upon prudent proprietors, farmers advanced in years, or municipal officers; but those of several towns were not so rational: in that of Berne particularly, the influence of the prevailing party was visible.

Such was the excellence of the general spirit, that far from disturbing the Supreme Council by their turbulence and demands, those Deputies contented themselves with subscribing to the proposed alterations, without either contradicting or supporting them, nor did the Assembly lose its original character.

If, according to the advice of some enlightened men, this convocation had been restricted to a mere act of confidence, of consultation upon the danger of the State, and upon the means of averting it; if this

junction had been made the occasion of strengthening the power of the State by concentrating it, and of sanctioning the establishment of a temporary Dictatorship, Berne perhaps would yet have existed. This necessity of substituting to the rout, incoherence, and tardiness of the Councils, a power less thwarted, more secret, more formidable, and more active, had been acknowledged by all parties: but that party which was for peace, finding that the public voice marked out the *Avoyer de Steiguer* and four Magistrates of approved firmness for the exercise of the Dictatorship, withdrew their support, and abandoned a resolution which was to put the salvation of the country into the hands of their rivals.

Called to deliberate, the fifty-two associates only served to increase relaxation and irresolution. Without a moral miracle, the most of those simple and inexperienced men must have been defective in that masculine reason and intense application so rare every where, but especially in large assemblies. They were seduced by the prospect of averting war; their condescension was abused: several restless Deputies, ambitious or deceived, suffered themselves to be led by some lawyers, and particularly by *De Bay*, the Deputy from Berne itself, a pragmatical fellow, fond of novelties, who treated affairs of State like law-suits, was for ever broaching his advice to negotiate, and who,

was determined upon making the most of the public character with which the occasion had invested him.*

Mixed with the Deputies, the Supreme Council began by making them sanction the overthrow of a Constitution, admired and esteemed by the people, and coëval with the Republic itself. This suicide was urged by *Bay* the Lawyer and his followers, directly contrary to the instructions of the Communes: but in the execution of it, they were desirous of preventing it from superinducing an unlimited revolution and disorder: consequently, under the idea that they were placing barriers to an order of things which admitted none, they passed a decree on the 3d of February, as follows:

“ After taking, in the presence of God, a solemn oath to defend with our lives and fortunes our country against every external or internal enemy, we have resolved freely, and without *any demand or request* in this respect made to us, to unite the Government to the whole nation by the most cordial ties, and to make such improvements in our Constitution as the good of the country requires, and such as are conform-

* The generality of those extraordinary Deputies would have remained faithful to their instructions, had not the Government itself made them subscribe to the violation of them. After their admission they published an address to the people, which is worthy of being preserved as the expression of the national sentiment. It will be inserted among *the Vuesberg* (C) at the end of this History.

able to the spirit and circumstances of the times."

In the enacting part that follows, it is ordained that a Committee be appointed to draw up a constitutional plan, and to take for the basis of the new system, the maxims, of the right of every citizen to be admitted to the offices and employments of Government, and of the elective representation of the people. The term of one year was fixed for the work of the Committee of Reform, and *in the firm determination of maintaining the religion, liberty, independence, and integrity of the State*, the resolution was taken of opposing all foreign interposition.

In reading this decree we discover the amalgamation of the different parties who drew it up, and the summary of their contradictions melted down together in a common treaty. It was doing too much with respect to internal security and harmony, and not enough with respect to the Directory of Paris. How was it to be expected that they would consent to those reservations, to that exclusion of their influence, to that delay of a year to complete the reforms? There could not be a more dangerous measure if it did not attain its end; and how could it do that without clashing with the end of a prompt and complete revolution, which was what the French Government meant? Besides, could the Magistrates, who were the guardians of the pub-

the Constitution, consent to destroy it, and to alter the nature of a pledge which the national voice prescribed to them to maintain unimpaired, without being guilty of treason against the nation?

The people received with indifference a decree which added nothing to their admirable regulations; a part of the public disapproved it, the Revolutionists condemned the insufficiency of it, and all reasonable men were alarmed at it, as opening a door to lasting storms. From that moment the Government lost its poise, and was no longer considered but in the light of a provisional Commission. This abdication of the Sovereignty shook the supreme authority by sophisticating its character; the division of opinions received fresh food; the magic of power vanished, and anarchy reared its head in the midst of magistrates without force, and people without confidence.

This example, nevertheless, was immediately followed by Lucerne, Fribourg, Soleure, and Schaffhausen. In the three first of these Cantons, the peasants, on seeing the innovations, rose, and in a tumultuous manner insisted upon the maintenance of their ancient laws. On the 6th of February, a considerable assemblage of these countrymen came and demanded the arrest of traitors and club-men, seized about thirty of them, and called for their immediate condemnation. Before this, Venice, in

1797, had displayed a similar sight of a nation rising to defend its Government against the Government itself, and the horror of the French Revolution, that had taken refuge in the multitude.

At Zurich the concessions made were despised by the inhabitants of the borders of the Lake, who, seduced by the enemy, refused to supply their quota. Basle, led by the creatures of *Ochs* and *Mengaud*, effected a total subversion. Emissaries, spread over the country, created riots, attacked and burnt the houses of several bailiffs, laid the habitations of some citizens in ruins, and, supported by a mob of drunken and misguided peasants, broke the Government, proclaimed equality, separated the State from Switzerland, and put their capital into the guise of a Jacobin Club, under the sovereignty of the French Legation.

All the fruits, then, of the ordinances of the 3d of February, were reduced to raising fermentation, division, and public discontent. A fortnight had not elapsed before the authors of these innovations might see the extent of their rashness, and the vanity of their hopes. On the 7th they had notified to the Directory the decree of the 3d, in a humiliating letter, in which they assured them of *their reliance upon their equity*. They had also deputed to Basle four of their Members, among whom were *Tillier* and *Bay*, the two manufacturers in chief of a

more extensive revolution. And to these men were committed the task of soothing the ire of *Mengaud*, and of apologizing for the reduction of his *brothers* of Arau. This Agent soon undeceived the credulity of Berne. Taking up his pen on the 13th of February, he sent them a note, worthy an Algerine Aga, containing fresh insults and his final commands: "The egotism," said he, "the intrigues, the perfidy of some Members of the Helvetic Governments, have already too long outweighed the *general will*. An end should be put to this indecent struggle, and the Majesty of the French Republic will not suffer itself to be degraded by the clashing of injurious resistance, and shufflings which render the proposed reforms ineffectual." This preamble was followed by an imperious demand of a complete resignation of the entire Magistracy, of the suppression of the Council of War and Privy Council, and of the creation of a Provisional Government, *founded on the principles of Democracy*, to which none of the former Members should be admissible. The lofty Dictator concludes with requiring the immediate liberty of the press, amends for the citizens of Arau, and for all persons *persecuted by reason of their political opinions, or for refusing to march against France*.

Five days afterwards, the same Chancery infested the Cantons with an advertisement to the people, annexed to the foregoing

note, in which the Swiss were represented as "abandoned to the despotism of a handful of covetous Magistrates, without soul and without honour, always ready to sell themselves to the enemies of France, and who were bought by the gold of England. I affirm," added *Mengaud*, "that it is false that the French Republic has any wish to intermeddle in the affairs of Switzerland, when once it is reformed."*

In this manner did the shameless Envoy of a Government without morals express himself towards sovereign States, that for six years past had, by their neutrality, covered sixty leagues of French frontiers, on which there was neither fortification nor army!

Such wickedness and insolence once more sunk the authority of the counsellors of perdition, who were plunging Berne into fruitless meaneffes. They were no longer considered but as dupes or traitors. Without demeaning themselves to answer, the Deputies sent to Basle were charged to signify to *Mengaud*, a peremptory refusal of acceding to any of his demands. The public spirit was again revived: 25,000 men, in three divisions, marched to the frontier; the Helvetic quotas were in motion; in every class, in all ages, the resolution of saving the State, or perishing gloriously,

* Avis du Ministre de la Republique Françoise au Peuple Suisse, 30 Pluviose, an. 6.

surmounted every uncertainty : the women, intrepid in mind and heart, and who, in the course of the French Revolution, had every where displayed a superior degree of sentiment, courage, and reason, instructed the citizens to brave dangers and death.

Why was not this generous enthusiasm attended to ? Why did the Government almost immediately fall back into the mazes of the enemy ? General *Menard* had been succeeded in the Pays de Vaud by a man more expert, not in the military art, but in revolutionary tactics, and all the refinements of vice.

This crafty adventurer, named *Brune*, a native of Limosin, was lingering in misery in the filth of Paris, when the Revolution in 1789 placed him in the Cordeliers Club. In partnership with *Marat* he printed an inflammatory paper in 1790, in which M. *de la Fayette* and the Mayor of Paris, insulted in their turns, shared with the Royal Family the invectives of those two wretches. M. *de la Fayette* surrounded *Marat's* house with the Parisian National Guard, missed that monster, but seized *Brune's* presses, who had been promoted to a higher lot. He was a Septembrist in 1792, executioner of the proscriptions at Bordeaux in 1793, employed by the Committee of Public Safety, in the iron and copper works of the Sections in 1795 ; and the same year went with *Fréron* to deluge Provence with blood. *Bar-*

ras, who had made a General of him in the army of Italy, recalled him to Paris previous to the 18th Fructidor : this confidant of the Directory, capable of every thing, who had been accused in the Convention of stealing horses, who was grown rich by executions and rapine, was the agent whom the French Republic introduced to the Swiss as a *peace-maker*. Such was their ignorance both of characters and things, that they received this incendiary as a mild and easy negotiator.

He was instructed to lull the State of Berne till the arrival of the reinforcements expected from the army of the Rhine, which would increase that of the Directory in Switzerland to 45,000 men. The two divisions already there in the middle of February amounted at most to 24,000 ; this force was joined by a collection of 2 or 3000 Jacobins, banditti, hair-brained Vaudois and strangers, led by one *de Bons* of Lausanne. This combined body, posted on the northern frontier of the Pays de Vaud, was but at a small distance from the Bernese army, which had the centre of its left wing at Morat, and occupied the ground, famous for the defeat of *Charles the Bold* in 1476.

Trying at first artifices and menaces, *Brune* summoned M. *d'Erlach d'Hindelsbank*, Commander in Chief of the Bernese, to surrender Morat. "My ancestors," replied the worthy heir of the Conqueror of Laupen,

“never surrendered. Were I base enough to think of it, the monument* of their valour which we have before our eyes would deter me. Let it spare me in future such messages.”

Brune immediately changed his place of attack. While *Mengaud* exhausted the outrages and expedients of terrorism, the General talked and acted as Plenipotentiary. He spreads abroad an opinion of his moderation and sincerity; and deposes a gentleman of Lausanne, imposed upon by his cunning, to Berne, with pacific overtures. On the arrival of the message, the Coalition which opposes resistance recovers strength, gives new hopes, and dispatches two agents to the French General, who receives them with tenderness, and begs for negociators. On their return they celebrate his honesty and purity of intentions: the credulous majority of the Government recover their serenity, call *Brune* their *protector* and their *friend*, and proclaim the certainty of peace. This delirium spreads to a part of the public; they run from anxieties to felicitations and embraces;

Ignari scelerum tantorum artisq̃ Pelasgæ.

Berne is Troy once more deceived by the tears of *Sinon*.

A hundred and twenty members of the

* The burial-place of the Bourguignons, about a mile from Morat.

Supreme Council, a number of the Country Deputies, every prudent man, saw the snare ; but their penetration could not keep the majority out of it. On the 15th of February M. *de Frisching*, formerly Chief Treasurer, the antagonist of the Avoyer *de Steiguer*, and M. *Tschärner* of St. John, one of the most respectable of men and virtuous of citizens, repaired to Payerne, General *Brune*'s quarters. By their instructions, which were limited, they were enjoined to ground the negotiation upon the evacuation of Erguel and the Pays de Vaud by the French, upon their retiring to the distance of twelve leagues from the frontiers, and upon Switzerland being guaranteed from any requisition of men or money, and every Canton being left free to make at their pleasure suitable reforms without any foreign interposition.

Brune received the Deputies with a feigned cordiality : far from opposing them, he approved of their demands, acknowledged the justice of them, extolled the loyalty of Berne, and promised peace on the most equitable terms : but when he was pressed to conclude, he lamented the necessity of dispatching a courier to the Directory. To obtain the conferences, he had given out that he had *unlimited* powers, and when it only remained to conclude, he pretended his powers were *circumscribed*.

The object of this deceitful farce was to

gain time for the arrival of the troops from the Rhine, to relax the preparations of the Swiss by pacific appearances ; and while these hypocritical negotiations were going on, to do every thing to corrupt the troops, the people, and the senates.

On the 24th of February the two Deputies returned to Berne, after signing a truce at Payenne for fifteen days, at the expiration of which *Brune* gave his word that he should receive the most satisfactory orders from Paris.

The danger of this armistice soon appeared : till they were ready for war of a more bloody nature, *Brune* and *Mengaud* actively waged that of intrigue, subornation, and undermining sieges. Unpunished club-men, mountebanks of patriotism, and dexterous traitors, served as agents. Suspicions were sown on all sides : it was insinuated to the soldiers and the country people, that the Government wished the Revolution, that they were calling in the French, that they were giving up the people to them, and only kept the troops under arms to worry them with fatigue and make them unable to fight. At the inns, on chimney-pieces, even in their pockets, the Bernese soldiers found printed hand-bills, asserting that their leaders were betraying them. From Basle to Zurich, and thence to Lucerne, the agents of *Mengaud* were flying about with handfuls of money, suborning the country-people,

and offering a Louis-d'or to whoever would refuse to march in the quotas of the State.

In the Government of each State, persons purposely appointed fomented dissensions, described emphatically the consequences of war, and laboured to discourage and to dissolve. *Tillier* and *Bay*, the Deputies at Basle, inspired by the French Legation, and initiated into its plots, increased the alarms, pressed the Government to abdicate, and circulated letters, by means of their accomplices, in which all resistance was painted as a calamity without remedy.* In their absurd security the prevailing party, taking their confidence for proofs, infested all conditions with it, and by promising the troops a speedy peace, they brought them to desire it: the interval of the truce was wasted without exercising them; their ardour remitted; an alteration took place in their reason as well as in their discipline; the State was running down a steep, and destruction was at hand.

* The following is one of those treacherous letters of *Tillier's* that were made use of among the people:

" *Basle, Feb. 26, 1798.*

" All proves that nothing can save us, but keeping our word with the country, by executing the decree of the 3d, by abdicating the old Government, by creating a provisional one, and by adopting measures of mildness. If we do not adhere to it, I dread the horrors that will be the consequence. Basle furnishes us with an *example for imitation*; there all goes on in the *best order*. What a series of horrors if we are obstinate!"

This *Tillier*, his colleague *Bay*, and several other demagogues of the same party in the Councils, were thus strenuous for this total subversion of the Government, from the well-founded hope of being immediately placed, by the patronage of France, at the head of the new system.

C H A P. VIII.

State of the Helvetic Forces.—Fluctuations in the Councils of Berne.—Violation of the Truce by the French.—Battles, and Reduction of the Cantons of Fribourg, Soleure, and Berne.

THE notoriety of the French manœuvres, the audacity of their agents, and the criminal hopes of their accomplices, removed all doubt of the duplicity of General *Brune* : he accelerated the march of the troops that were to reinforce him, the end of the armistice was at hand, and the Bernese were still balancing between peace and war, without daring to devote themselves to the one or to renounce the other.

However, before the end of February, every mind was settled : People, Soldiers, Magistrates, all resumed their native genius : the artifices of the intriguing, the uneasiness of the cowardly, and the disreputable perseverance of the conciliators, gave way to the cry of honour and of liberty, which reverberated from the capital to the lonely valleys of the Alps.

The 25,000 men who formed the Bernese army, commanded in chief by M. *d'Erlach*, formerly a Field-Marshal in the service of France, occupied a space of 35 leagues, having the General himself at their head. The left of the first division lay at Fribourg,

its centre at Morat, and its right at the villages of Vuilly, towards the extremity of the Lake of Morat: the *Faithful Legion*, composed of 1000 resolute Vaudois, defended the out-posts. The second division, under the command of M. *Graffenried*, Quarter-Master-General, extended a line of eight leagues to the north-west from the bridge over the river Thiele to the town of Buren: between Buren and Soleure, the third division, under General *de Bure*, covered nearly an equal space. Large Bernese detachments defended Soleure and Fribourg with the inhabitants of the two towns: and, lastly, a small body of 2000 men in the valley of the Ormonds, adjoining the Pays de Vaud, continued this line to the south-east as far as the mountains which command the Rhone, where it falls into the Lake of Geneva.

The cavalry of this army amounted to 550 dragoons, and a new-raised regiment of hussars: it wanted engineers and experienced staff-officers. But provided with all else, and overflowing with courage, it depended upon making amends for its inexperience by an impetuous and decisive blow. Its position so extended, its character, the fear of tiring the zeal of the militia by remaining long inactive, all was decidedly against continuing on the defensive, and the generals and officers were unanimous to avoid it.

The first Helvetic quotas, led by good officers, were daily arriving, but very incomplete. That of Zurich amounted to no more than 1500 men, from the obstinate disobedience of the borderers of the Lake, who could neither be reduced nor persuaded. Uri sent 600 men; Schwitz, Glaris, and Unterwalden, 400 each; Appenzel, and the town of St. Gall, scarcely 350; Lucerne, 1200, with orders to cover the frontiers of the Canton. Fribourg and Soleure, equally exposed with Berne, kept their troops for their respective territories; Zug did not send one man; and the succours of Basle and of Schaffhausen consisted of impertinent deputations to urge submission to the ordinances of *Mengaud*.

These several quotas, which did not amount to 5500 men, received instructions to remain in the second line, and keep on the defensive. It was to this military parade that the effect of the oath taken at Arau tended; but these reservations were not irrevocable, and events might induce more patriotic arrangements.

It was now the 25th of February; the truce expired on the 1st of March: the troops began to shew their impatience by murmurs; they were seconded by the public, and by the select part of the magistracy; all were angry at this motionless state. Nobody was more anxious to put an end to it than the General himself. On the 26th

he went to the Supreme Council with eighty officers, who, as well as himself, were Members of that Assembly : there, encompassed by the shade of his ancestors, and inspired by their spirit, he spoke thus : “ I come, before the truce expires, to ask permission to disband the army, and send the men home to their cottages. It is useless to expose so many brave fellows to be massacred, or to undergo the shame of a defeat, which would be inevitable in the positions we have been made to take. If you persist in your erroneous measures, I must give in my resignation. I am determined to do so, unless, discarding all weakness, and recovering the sentiments of honour and of patriotism, which seem to be extinguished in this Council, you give me an order and authority to make use of the willing spirit and valour of the bravest of nations.”

Electrified by these words, the Assembly opened the debate : a hundred speakers supported the General's demand ; not one dared to say a word against those tones of energy and magnanimity. Opposition, struck dumb, yielded to the emotion ; and the Sitting concluded in four hours, with unanimous acclamations bestowing on General d' Erlach *the uncontrolled power of marching and of employing the troops as he shall judge requisite, and this at the expiration of the truce, or even sooner, if, before its expiration, the French commit any trespass upon the country.*

In the midst of the enthusiasm excited by the reading of the decree, an aid-de-camp of General *Brune*'s is announced to the Assembly, who notifies the return of the courier that had been dispatched to the Directory, and the arrival of full powers, and delivers an invitation to open a conference at Payerne.

Notwithstanding this stage trick, evidently concerted between *Brune* and some disappointed members, to throw the snare of a negociation in the way of the resolution that had been taken, and to weaken it, the Council, not to be shaken, confirmed it, at the same time acceding to the conference demanded. On that very day, the former Deputies, M. *Frisching* and M. *Tscharner*, returned to Payerne, after being enjoined not to depart on any point from their original instructions. The Deputies at Basle were recalled, and the general indignation threatened them with an impeachment.

As soon as the decision of the 26th was known, the generous sentiments of its authors spread to the public: at length they saw the end of anguish, outrage, and disgrace. Every one blessed the courage of the Government, and reckoned upon the fortune of its standards. Officers and soldiers, veterans and invalids, old men and women, pleased with the prospect of battle, prepared to share it: horror at the French name fired their hearts, and could be read upon their faces.

In leaving the Great Council, General *d'Erlach* repaired to the Council of War with Colonel *de Gros*,* who was at the head of the staff of the central division, and M. *de Graffenried* of *Pumplitz*, Quarter-Master General, in order to resolve upon arrangements for a general attack at the end of the truce.

According to this plan, the three divisions of the army were to march towards the enemy in twelve collateral columns, five of which to the left under the commander in chief, attended by the colonels *Tscharner*, *de Watteville*, *Stettler*, and *Roverea*, were to attack the enemy at *Avenche* and *Payerne*. Four central columns, commanded by the Quarter-Master-General *de Graffenried*, and Colonels *Manuel*, *de Gros*, and *de Werdt*, were appointed to force the French from their positions on the mountain of *Dieffe*, at *Bienne*, and at *Erguel*; while to the right, General *de Buren*, with the three remaining columns, were to turn the enemy's left by the mountains of *Soleure*.

While M. *d'Erlach*, who was now returned to the army, was making arrangements for its approaching operations, on the faith of his full powers; while the Deputies, who had been sent to *Payerne*, were receiving from *Brune* an *ultimatum* that could not be

* This Bernese officer had been a Lieutenant Colonel in the Dutch service, and towards the end of 1795 he defended *Grave* with distinguished skill and bravery. He very early gave his countrymen military counsels, which were too much neglected.

accepted, and who in quitting him on the evening of the 28th gave notice to the posts that hostilities would begin the next day, March 1st, *at six o'clock in the evening*, which was the term of the truce, a scene of shame, of affliction, and of ruin, was acting at Berne.

Driven to despair by the decree of the 26th, that very minority who had not dared to oppose it, taking advantage of the absence of the General, and a hundred officers, procured a repeal on the 28th of the powers granted to M. *d'Erlach*, and a suspension of the order for the attack. They took the same opportunity to resolve the abdication of the Government, the formation of a new provisional system, and a fresh deputation to General *Brune*, to carry him the offering of this ignominy, as a pledge of peace and of friendship.

These surreptitious and tumultuous resolutions were the result of the infamous manœuvres of the Deputies returned from Basle, of the terror they spread among the weak and credulous Representatives, and of the promises with which they dazzled the ambitious. After violent debates they were carried by a small majority, while every virtuous citizen then remaining in the Council protested against them.

The instigators of so vile a prostitution of the national confidence, having every thing to fear from the public resentment,

strove to direct it against their opponents, to throw the odium of their treason upon those who refused to be the accomplices of it, and to devote them to popular vengeance, in order to escape it themselves. The State was dissolved ; it still remained to dissolve the army and the nation. Every engine was set to work, insinuations, writings, impostures, threats, promises, and corruption.

Upon the signal given him from Berne, Brune, that very day, February 28th, publishes and disperses a proclamation, in which he says to the Swiss Nation :* “ My brave soldiers are your friends and your brothers ; in punishing tyranny they only burn to assist you in breaking its impious yoke. Amidst the outrages committed by your oligarchy, I expected some return of reason, *some signs of remorse*. Neither ambition nor avarice shall disgrace our conduct ; I come among you only to punish the guilty usurpers of your sovereignty. Do not be at all uneasy about *your personal safety, your properties, your religion, your political independence*. The French Government GUARANTEES THEM FOR YOU. Be free ; the French Republic invites, and Nature orders you to be so.” At the other end of Switzerland, Mengaud echoes this plundering flourish. In a new Address to the Swiss Nation, he

* Proclamation de Brune, de Payerne, le 10 Ventose (28 Fevrier).

allows that he is an *object of hatred to them* ; but *he is going to make them hear the language of reason and of truth* :—" To regenerate Switzerland is not to disturb it. Who are so base as to dare to tarnish the glory of the French armies ? Who, in all the world, is ignorant of their generosity, equal to their valour, except the magistrates of Berne, and their adherents ? Do not arm yourselves ; they are only brothers joining you against our common enemies. Their blows *will not be dealt by chance* ; they will not fall upon *the mistaken citizen, or the peaceable husbandman*. The French army will be terrible only to that handful of perverse rulers stubborn in frantic rage. We offer you peace : and do you choose war ?"*

Execrable dissemblers ! And these are the agents of a power defended by 400,000 soldiers, of a Republic of thirty million of *philosophers*, who descended to those profanations of public faith, who sported thus with the simplicity of an unfortunate people, and who, at the moment they were going to cut their throats, were lavishing

* This writing of Mengaud's, entitled, *Encore un mot au Peuple Suisse*, 11 Ventose (March 1st,) shews clearly that several Members of the Supreme Council were his accessories. He says in it, that by a mistake in the printing of his preceding note, he had excluded from the new Government to be established, all the *Members of the old* ; but that by that exclusion he meant only to strike at the Magistrates known for their attachment to the Oligarchy. In the Government, he adds, there are to be found some persons whose probity I esteem, and whose patriotic sentiments I am acquainted with. The esteem of Mengaud is the measure for the probity of those Bernese Patriots.

upon them the impious effusions of their tenderness !

The decree was passed : Berne expiring, sacrificed by those who were appointed the guardians of its welfare, was falling to shatters. The rending of a dreadful anarchy was about to precede its destruction ; the robe of *Nessus* was circulating its venom through all ranks.—No more country, no more laws, no more ties ! the blood of the just was about to flow, crime to triumph, Hell to be let loose, and this monument of union to be hurled away by the convulsions of discord.

How was the unfortunate *d'Erlach* engaged, while his unworthy countrymen were sacrificing him, the army, the republic, and the nation ? He had just finished reconnoitring, disposing his operations, distributing his instructions, and arranging the general attack for the 2d of March, at four o'clock in the morning, when he was thunderstruck with the decree that annihilated his powers, his plans, his hopes, and the Government. Its secret influence had appeared in the army, some hours before, by several indications of mutiny. The disorganizers had not lost their labour in running through the columns, that were infested with letters and printed papers, in which the soldiers were cautioned to beware of their *Leaders who were sold to the French*. Seven battalions revolted ; the of-

ficers of one of them had refused to march : distrust and uneasiness became general, and a buzzing fermentation announced the danger of having remained so long inactive.

The General flies to Berne, exhausts himself in remonstrances and reproaches that are treated with scorn, returns to his army, there finds a commotion constantly increasing ; encourages his troops, promises to lead them soon against the enemy, and, a prey himself to grief, consoles his desponding officers.

Yet, though the order for attack was suspended, that of defending themselves remained in force. That very day, the 1st of March, at ten o'clock at night, the armistice was to expire. M. *Tschärner* of St. John, who was sent again to Payerne with the resolution adopted on the 28th of February, and accompanied by the Deputies of Fribourg, had found *Brune* insensible to the humiliation of the Republic. General *Scharwenbourg* was just arrived in the Bishopric of Basle with the first divisions of the army of the Rhine, the French gangrene was spreading fast through the Councils, the troops, and domestic circles. Certain of its effect, and secure in the inconsistency manifested at Berne, *Brune* disdained the obedience of the councils ; and upon his first *ultimatum* being agreed to, he tacked to it the demand, that the Bernese army be immediately withdrawn and disbanded. This would have

been to surrender at discretion: the very traitors and cowards did not dare to second such a proposition. In consequence, the order for preparing for the attack on the night of the 1st and 2d was renewed, and transmitted to all the columns.

Unexpectedly, after an interval of two hours, arrives a counter-order of the Council of War, which again suspends the operations and hostilities. This unexpected incident was owing to a return of hope upon some agreement with the French General, and a continuation of the truce for *thirty hours* beyond its original term. *Brune*, crowning his career of frauds with a finishing abuse of confidence, had granted this delay to the Deputies of Berne and Fribourg, whom he detained with him *to negotiate*, at the moment that he was meditating the order of attack, or rather of surprise, even before the expiration of the first armistice.*

Let it be imagined what effect this contrariety of cross-decisions produced upon the Bernese army and upon the people! A thousand confused emotions beat in every heart: distrust turned into fury; the inexplicable revocation of orders given, sus-

* This prolongation of the truce is proved, not only by the unanimous testimony of the Deputies, of the Government, of the inhabitants of Berne, and by the counter-order which was the consequence of it; but, moreover, by the confession of General *Brune* himself. "*I had given thirty hours to repair the injuries received,*" is what he writes on the 14th Ventose (March 4th) to the Directory.—See *le Rédacteur du 24 Ventose, an 6, No. 819.*

pended, renewed, withdrawn, was placed to the account of secret collusions : and those troops, who eight days before asked but to die at the feet of their commanders, now saw in them only the accomplices of the French. Penetrated with horror at the latter, with resentment against the former, sinking from confidence to despair, and wrought upon by villains who were pointing out to them the heads to be devoted, they were no longer subject to any power but that of suspicion.

Kept alive by unwearied corruption, these unfortunate impressions seemed justified, when in the morning of the 2d the noise of the French cannon gave notice that, in spite of the truce, *Brune* and *Schawenbourg* had attacked the two wings of the Swiss army.

It was with 46,000 men, 22,000 of which were lately come from the Rhine, that the Generals of the French Republic, that the Ministers of its *fidelity and of its generosity*, favoured by the night, took care to secure for themselves the advantage of a violation of sworn faith, and surprised their victims in the hour of confident repose.

The second armistice was to finish on the 3d of March at four o'clock in the morning : but so soon as the 1st, between nine and ten in the forenoon, *Schawenbourg*, by *Brune's* order, breaking even the first truce, makes a sudden attack upon the Castle of

Dornach, at the northern extremity of the Canton of Soleure. While for 24 hours this crazy building holds out and defends itself, a weak old man, appointed by Soleure to guard the heights and defiles which cover that town, gives notice to his troops of the 30 hours truce, is perfectly ignorant of the attack, and suspends all precaution. In the night between the 1st and 2d, the French march, and guided by traitors, before daylight, hem in the intermediate post of Lengnau, between Buren and Soleure : 7800 attack 750 Mountaineers of Oberland : this battalion, though surpris'd, defends itself furiously, and loses its best officers. Colonel *Wourstemberguer*, dangerously wounded, is taken with 9 officers and 200 men ; near 200 more are killed or are not engaged ; and intrepid peasants are put to the sword and massacred. The broken remains of this detachment having fallen back upon two other Bernese battalions, posted before Soleure, the town shuts its gates upon them.

In the midst of this confusion, the enemy, holding the central division of the Bernese army in check, and amusing it by a faint attack, march 13,000 under the walls of Soleure. General *Scharwenbourg* immediately summons the place in an unexampled style of savage ferocity. "The Executive Directory order me," says this Alfacian, "to take possession of the town of Soleure ; adding, that if I meet the least resistance, or

a single drop of blood be spilt, the Members of the Soleurian Government shall answer for it with their heads, that their fortunes shall be confiscated, and that I must see this executed in the most striking and inexorable manner. Notify the will of the Directory to the Members of your Government : I grant you *half an hour* to determine ; after which time I shall burn your town and put the garrison to the sword."

In this style of a Tartar chastizing rebellious slaves was it that the Directory and their Janissaries treated free men, neutral neighbours, and allies ! Thus was it that philosophy respected the laws of war, of humanity, and of nations, by threatening to massacre peaceable Republicans, and to reduce their habitations to ashes, if they attempted to defend themselves.

This atrocious summons, the unexpected force of the enemy, the confusion in the Councils, and the dissension of the people, caused the gates to be opened, at the conclusion of a mock capitulation, in which *Scharwenbourg* promises *respect of persons and property*. By way of keeping his word, without delay, his troops pillaged 24 adjacent villages ; and their General, on entering the town, disarmed the inhabitants, seized their military equipage, and released the conspirators found in confinement.

At the very time that *Scharwenbourg* was marching to Soleure, in the morning of the

2d, before day, Fribourg at the eastern extremity of the line was attacked by *Brune's* order, while he was amusing the Deputies in ignorance at Payerne. Affaulted unawares, and in the dark, by a strong column of French and Vaudois their allies, the advanced posts of Fribourg, after a vigorous resistance, fell back, and went to wake the Government from their sleep. They fly to arms in confusion, meet in Council, the enemy appears with a summons in their hands, the Revolutionists run to the State-House to second it, the Magistrates dismayed resolve to surrender, and order the gates to be opened.

There was a Bernese battalion of 500 men in the town: the peasants and a number of loyal citizens ran to join it: they all rush together to the gates, shut them again, and recover the Arsenal, which the rebels had taken possession of. Astonished at this unexpected resistance, the French threw in a few shells and set some houses on fire. As the town had no ramparts, its defenders could not keep it long, therefore to save it from being pillaged, and the inhabitants from being massacred, the Bernese, accompanied by a large body of countrymen and young Patricians, evacuated the place, taking with them thirty pieces of cannon in the fight of the enemy: they posted themselves at the village of Saingines, three leagues from Berne, where they maintained their ground against every attack.

The enemy, by the invasion of Soleure being master of the bridge of Aar, turned the right of the Bernese army, and bore upon the central division in front and upon its flanks. The loss of Fribourg exposed in like manner the left wing, and endangered its being cut off: it was therefore necessary to change positions, concentre the forces, and fall back upon Berne. This line of retreat was settled in the south from the passes of Neweneg and of Laupen on the frontiers of the Canton of Fribourg, to Frauenbrun in the north, near the borders of the Canton of Soleure. The intermediate posts at Shopfen, Frienisberg, Buchsée, Arberg, and Guminen, covered the capital, at the distance of three or four leagues.

It was during this retreat that the effect of the seductions and the frenzy of the troops began to break out. At sight of Soleure taken, and the country laid waste, the right division, chiefly composed of the militia of Argovia, disbanded itself: the soldier thought now only of his house and family, and each man hastened to his village to defend it. General *de Buren*, who commanded this division, had looked with jealousy upon the chief command in the hands of *M. d'Erlach*, under whom he served with reluctance: he could not keep above a fourth of his men at their colours.

In the division of the centre, which had sustained and repulsed several attacks, the

mutiny took a gloomy and furious turn : the counter-orders of the preceding day, the surprize of the battalion cut to pieces on the 2d at Leugnau, Fribourg and Soleure carried without resistance, and the order for retreat which followed, were in the eyes of the troops certain indications of their being betrayed : they loudly accused their officers of it, and rose at Nidau to demand vengeance. Colonel *de Gross* narrowly escaped being put to death, by a regiment which imputed to him the revocation of the plan of attack. In its tumultuous retreat, this division took of itself the posts it chose to occupy ; all confidence was destroyed, discipline totally at an end, and authority without credit.

By the conduct of Colonel *de Watterville*, the retreat of the left division was made in an orderly manner and without loss, to the posts of Guminen, Laupen, and Newenegg. As to the Helvetic quotas, they, remaining immovable in the rear, had resisted every sollicitation to concur in the operations, and considered themselves as a party of observation : the nearer the danger approached, the more obstinate became this spirit of standing aloof : each Canton, on the eve of being attacked at home, thought itself excused from giving active assistance to that which was in more immediate danger.

Every spring thus weighed down, Berne, agitated by tumultuous emotions, struggled

between contradictory resolutions, and completed anarchy. On the 3d the levy of the *Landsturm*, that is to say, of the inhabitants in general assembled by the alarm-bell, was ordered:—a weak and dangerous resource in the ferment of distrust and dissension, with mutinous troops and a State without government. This undisciplined multitude could only serve to increase confusion, and to create a new species of misfortunes.

By this desperate summons it seemed as if it had been determined not to lay down their arms till they had removed those of the enemy to a distance. All was going to ruin, though all was not yet ruined: but at the very moment of adopting this appeal for vigour to the whole nation, they were deprived of the direction and support of their magistracy, and the dissolution of the Government was enforced; a provisional Regency, hastily elected in the confusion, took up the broken sceptre of sovereignty on the 4th of March. The first act of this credulous commission was to notify this event to *Brune*; supposing that it would produce a speedy pacification; and in order to facilitate it, it was agreed to dismiss their army, on condition that the enemy kept his in the posts it occupied.

All this incoherence and submission was not yet enough for the French General. Informed of the ravages made among the troops by his treachery and his agents, hav-

ing little to dread from a broken Government, and only to combat with anarchy, he required that Berne, after disbanding all her defenders, should receive a French garrison. A simple political revolution would not have answered his views : it was convenient that he should have the Capital, the treasures of the State, its arsenals, its magazines, the wealth of Switzerland, and the spoils of its inhabitants : any capitulation short of this, merited only his contempt.

Meanwhile, the public effervescence hourly increased, the soldiers' rage became furious, and the cry of treachery was spread from the camps to the people ; the French agents every where sowed terror, and inflamed the suspicions ; each man took up arms, without knowing against whom he was to use them ; the army placed its officers among the number of its enemies ; the officers, victims to the fluctuations of the Government, had to fear the swords of their own men, and the assassins employed by *Brune* ; a national insurrection seemed to be breaking out at once against the new Regency, against the military leaders, and against the French : the tempest was blowing from all points of the compass. On the 3d at night, the left division rose tumultuously, deserted their posts at Guminen and Laupen, and went to Berne, after ill-treating and wounding several of their officers. The Capital was now between the swag-

gering Jacobins of the place, the revolted troops, and the enemy's army. The insurgent division being arrived at the gates of the town, two Magistrates spent the night in persuading them to return to their duty: they demanded new officers, broke the old ones, and re-elected them. It was thought that they were quieted, when in the morning of the 4th they surrounded their two commanding officers, Colonels *Stettler* and *Ryhiner*, and put them to the bayonet. An animated young woman, niece to the *Avoyer de Steiguer*, threw herself into the midst of those madmen to save their victims, and returned to Berne with the bleeding corpses of the two colonels, men of approved courage, patriotism, and merit, and for that very reason pointed out to the murderers by the French as traitors to be sacrificed.

Scarcely had they committed their crime before the fury of these men was turned to consternation: they went back to their posts, lamented their excesses, and repeated them next day, after having fought with bravery.

It was at the conclusion of this horrible convulsion, on the evening of the 4th, that from the abyss of chaos arose a determination of the strangest nature. The Provisional Government, reduced to surrender the State, the Capital, the lives and fortunes of the citizens, to the mercy of the impostor General, whose machiavelism they

at length acknowledged, or to avert the popular rage, by directing it against the enemy, resolved to resist, and to fight on the following day. Hasty orders, crossing and contradicting each other, are sent to every part of the astonished and discouraged line. Here, they are rejected; there, bands desert their colours, and return to their families; battalions compel their leaders, in spite of the instructions given, to change their destination.

How worthy of the highest admiration is the magnanimous devotement of the Magistrates, of the General, of the officers, who in so desperate a situation, still daring to depend upon a remnant of obedience and of courage, marched to battle over a thousand precipices!

Berne, in consternation, too late repented having slighted the Councils of the real friends of the country. Alas! it was no longer time for self-examination and remorse, a common destruction awaited all parties, and was about to confound all conditions.

The actual force of the Bernese army, reduced by so many desertions, amounted to 14,000 men, 8000 of which, making head against 20,000 Frenchmen, were stationed to defend the pass of Neweneg, three leagues to the southward of Berne, and that of Guminen, about the same distance, to the west. The remaining body of 6400

men held, in the north, the position of Frauenbrun, which was also three leagues from the capital. The *Landsturm* had crowded the roads with bands of badly-armed peasants, old men, women, and children. It was against the shattered remains of the Helvetic forces that General *Schawenbourg* advanced from Soleure with 18,000 men. As for the quotas of the other Cantons, their assistance could never be obtained, and the most of them, since the 2d, had even marched back towards their frontiers.

When the Provisional Government assumed their office, the venerable Avoyer *de Steiguer* laid down the ensigns of his : his career ended with the Republic : to the last day of his being president, he struggled against the destiny of the State, and opposed those many fatal resolutions with a noble stoicism, in which he was joined by ninety-six of his colleagues in the two Councils.

By an ancient law, the acting Avoyer was bound, in time of war, to take the command of the army in the day of battle. *M. de Steiguer* was no longer liable to that honourable obligation, as he had become a simple citizen : but his great soul attended to no such considerations. Neither the delicate state of his health, nor his great age, (sixty-nine,) nor opposition, nor dangers of any kind, could deter him. On the 4th, in the evening, he bade a last adieu

to a city that had been long honoured by his administration, and, accompanied by his brother and his family, went to face Death at Frauenbrun, where he joined General *d'Erlach*: an uninterrupted society of sentiments, honour, and courage reigned between these two chiefs, who were worthy to save the country or fall with it.

To cover the principal attack, directed by *Schawenbourg* against Frauenbrun, the enemy on the 5th, at one o'clock in the morning, began a fruitless cannonade on the post at Guminen, and advanced 15,000 men against Laupen, Neweneg, and St. Gines. Notwithstanding the surprise and the dark, the Bernese defended themselves with intrepidity, repulsed the enemy at St. Gines, and only yielded at Laupen and at Neweneg to the immense superiority of numbers. Adjutant-General *Wys*, who had been a captain in the old regiment of *Watteville*, having rallied the troops, and a reinforcement of 2000 men arriving at day-break, the attack was renewed with fury. The Bernese militia threw themselves headlong upon the enemy through a very hot fire of musquetry: the enemy overthrown repassed the gully of Neweneg, lost three leagues of ground, besides 2000 men killed or wounded, the artillery they had taken the night before, and several pieces of their own cannon. This action cost the Bernese 800 lives, including officers, rank and file, and women.

This victorious column was preparing to march to the assistance of Fribourg, when the events of the day compelled its retreat.

About five o'clock in the morning, *Schawenbourg* attacked in front and on both flanks the division at Frauenbrun, which was advantageously posted, but liable to be turned. Besides their extreme inferiority, the Bernese had to defend themselves against 2000 cavalry, to which they had only 400 militia dragoons to oppose, and against the flying artillery, a mode of fighting unknown to the Swiss, and which made great havoc among their infantry. With such advantages, and a triple force, it required no talents or courage, there was not much glory in conquering peasants, whose only strength was their courage.

The unshaken *Avoyer de Steigeur* harangued this little army, encouraged it by his example as well as by his exhortations, led it on himself, and kept in the heat of the battle. After a vigorous resistance, the post at Frauenbrun being carried, *M. d'Erlach* rallied his men at Urteren, there had a second engagement, and being dislodged from that position, took another a little back upon the *Grauholtz*, a very woody hill, which, at the distance of a league and a half from Berne, crosses the road leading from that city to Zurich, and on the right joins a very steep mountain. Here the conflict was renewed, and continued for two

hours and a half with a deadly obstinacy. At length, the French having got over the felled wood, and turned the position, the Bernese infantry again drew up a league and a half further, disputed every inch of ground, and, though weakened by its losses, fought a fifth battle that morning upon an exposed flat, almost at the gates of the capital. This open plain was strewed with dead bodies of soldiers, women, peasants, and the cattle that had been feeding, slain by the sabres of the cavalry, or the fire of the flying artillery. This unfortunate but intrepid army left 2000 killed or wounded of both sexes on the fields of battle : the loss of the French exceeded 1800 men.

The report of the cannon and musquetry was heard at Berne ; the last battle was fought within sight of it : no steps had been taken to defend the eminences which command it ; despair and terror seized all the inhabitants. Reduced to the alternative of being exposed to a bombardment and storm, or to surrender, the Regency, driven to extremities, sent and demanded a capitulation, or rather a safeguard, of General Brune, who, with his advanced guards, was arrived near Berne. In the evening the town was delivered up to him on his passing his word to respect *persons and property*.

Thus terminated this Republic, the alma-mater of great statesmen and warriors, celebrated for its wisdom, flourishing by its

maxims, illustrious for its valour ; and where no enemy had set his foot for several ages ; now given up to a French newspaper printer, who, in the name of five regicides clothed in purple, took possession of the inheritance and of the ashes of the *Bubenbergs*, the *d'Erlachs*, the *Wattevilles*, and the *Diefbachs*.

Brune occupied the walls of Berne ; but his genius, spread beyond its limits, had prepared scenes of horror which it is cruel to relate.

On the news of the surrender of Berne, the divisions at Neweneg and Guminen fell back towards the mountains and the city : wild with despair, the soldiers of the last of those columns turned upon their officers and slew their two Adjutant-Generals, the Colonels *de Croufaz* and *de Gunioens*. All discipline, all reason, all gratitude, had given way to the blind persuasion of the Republic's being betrayed by its leaders both civil and military. The real traitors, and the French agents, heightened this madness by suppositions, falsehoods, and drunkenness : the troops in their way home spread their fury through the country, and no one either could or dared to undeceive them.

Accustomed from father to son to pay their Magistrates an homage of veneration, and to think themselves invincible under their direction, these men, confounded at their defeat, threw the blame of it even

upon the intention of the Government : they had formerly such unbounded reliance on its wisdom, that they did not hesitate to impute the incoherence of the measures, the delay of the attack, and the reverses, to its treachery—the idol being thrown down was trampled upon by its worshippers.

Among a confident people, the first suspicion becomes the spring of unbridled fury. Among a phlegmatic people, it is as difficult to inflame as to quiet the passions : 'tis the eruption of a volcano from beneath a snow-hill. The Government once dissolved, the peasants considered themselves as returned to a state of nature, and tried to console themselves in the savage exercise of their vengeance.

It was through this disbanded soldiery carrying the tale of their disasters, the dying words of their sacrificed brothers in arms, and the lamentation of their grief over the country, that the *Avoyer de Steiguer* and General *d'Erlach* were making their way towards the Alps.

The range of vallies known by the names of Hasli and Oberland, and which, from the borders of the Lake of Thun, stretch south-east to the Glaciers, offered an impregnable retreat : it would have been difficult for 40,000 French to have made their way into that country where the roads are precipices, and which is defended by a lake, the shores of which are inaccessible to carriages.

These gigantic entrenchments had not been overlooked by the Government: in order to secure a retreat, arms and ammunition, 30 pieces of cannon, considerable magazines, and about £.160,000 sterling had been sent thither in the month of February.

Separated in the tumult of the last battle of the 5th, M. *de Steiguer* and General *d'Erlach* turned their steps towards this asylum. Both were ignorant that the infernal activity of the enemy had already scaled the mountains, that it was circulating its corrosives among them, and that there, as on the plains, the clamour of treachery had unsettled all defence, and disorganized this people, gifted with vast immunities, religiously fond of their Government, and whose allegiance seemed as immortal as the frozen summits that encompassed them. Disorder, distrust, and rage had here been at their height ever since the return of the shattered remains of the battalion that had been cut to pieces on the 2d at Lengnau.

Exhausted by fatigue, surrounded by dangers, and superior to his ill-fortune, M. *de Steiguer*, led by a serjeant, reached the Lake of Thun, after walking five leagues by a road obstructed by peasants drunk both with wine and resentment, and by the light troops of the enemy. Being obliged from weariness to sit down on the trunk of a tree, he fell asleep upon it—it was the sleep of the good: not knowing him, two French

Hussars suffered the august veteran, whose great coat concealed his dress, to escape. His life was twice in imminent danger, but Providence watched over him, and the respect for his virtue was, as it were, an invisible shield. He crossed the Lake of Thun, and within hearing of the excesses which attended the frenzy of the Mountaineers, passed over Mount Brunig, and made his way from Underwalden to the district of Bregentz belonging to the Emperor.*

Unfortunate *d'Erlach* ! a still more cruel fate awaited you. Your noble sentiments, your labours, your valour, your patriotisin, nothing could save you, devoted by those atrocious Republicans, whose enormities your penetration had more than once predicted to me !

On the 5th, in the morning, he said to young *de Varicourt*, an amiable French Engineer, who acted as his aid-de-camp ; " My friend, I see the sun rising, but never more shall I see him set." He thought to have died by the hands of the enemies of his country, but Heaven had ordained it otherwise. In the last retreat the musquet-shot flying about and aimed at him, wounded *M. de Varicourt* dangerously. Obligated to leave that officer ; covered with sweat, blood, and dust, and following the road *M. de Steiguer* had taken, he had got half

M. de Steiguer afterwards went to Vienna, and thence to Berlin, where he now is.

way, when he is recognized near the village of Munsingen, and seized by a gang of soldiers and frantic peasants. Neither that voice, which had a thousand times invoked their arms against their oppressors, nor his undaunted countenance, nor the remembrance of his ancestors, disarms those savage brutes. They tie their General to a cart's tail, and talk of sending him to Berne. Another band of furies come up, seize the victim, and, howling wildly, bury him panting under their bayonets and axes.

At the side of M. *d'Erlach*, one of his aid-de-camps, whose name was *Kneubuller*, and who was led thither by chance, was bound in the same manner; and imploring in vain for his General, fell under seventeen blows with which he was pierced.

The wretched wife of the martyred General, having taken refuge with her children at the extremity of the Lake of Thun, narrowly escaped, a few hours after, sharing the fate of her husband, and owed her life to a swoon into which she had been thrown by horror.

Shall we now explore the cause of such a crime?—I have been assured by respectable witnesses, that having, on the following days, questioned the assassins of M. *d'Erlach* on the motives of their ferocity, those wretches, struck with remorse and pity, confessed their sorrow, but justified their innocence. The FRENCH, said they ingenuously, show-

ED US LETTERS FROM GENERAL D'ERLACH, IN WHICH HE PROMISED THEM TO BETRAY US AND CONTRIVE OUR DEFEAT.* Such are the works and such the trophies of those *regenerators* of the world, who, in their den at Paris, profane the names of *virtue, generosity, justice, and truth*; whose *equity* the Congress of Rastadt has been soliciting for eight months; and to whom altars are erected by German Professors, United Irishmen, and Scholars equally destitute of feeling and principles!

Let us turn from this bloody feculence to take a view of actions worthy of remembrance, worthy to characterize the last sighs of Helvetic Liberty.

In the environs of Berne 800 women took up arms at the *Landsturm*, and joined the last battles. At Frauenbrun 260 women and girls received the enemy with scythes, pitchforks, and pickaxes; 180 were killed; among them was one named *Glar*, who had at her side two daughters and three granddaughters, the youngest scarcely ten years old: these six heroines were slain. The same scene was presented at Newenegg, at Laupen, and at Lengnau. In the battalion of Oberland, which defended the last place, there was a man serving with three sons and seven grandsons, all of whom lost their lives.

* I take upon me to answer for the truth of this fact, the authenticity of which can be proved by more than 2000 Bernese soldiers, who received similar notes.

The Senator *Effinguer*, a man of seventy years old, joined the army on the 4th in the evening, his sword in his hand, and pistols in his girdle ; he engaged at the head of a company of grenadiers, was wounded, taken prisoner, and died, a fortnight after, at Soleure in the Military Hospital, where *Schawenbourg* had been base enough to shut him up among soldiers dead or dying. Another Senator, M. *Herbort*, rather than survive the fall of the State, died by a ball from his own pistol.

A young peasant of Avenche, about twenty years old, was threatened by the French with death if he did not take up arms against the State : he boldly refused, adding, that it was *Buonaparte*, in passing through Switzerland, who had caused all the misfortunes of the country : on this he was led to punishment, and suffered himself to be shot without once asking for his life. A similar instance happened after one of the battles fought in the smaller Cantons in the month of May. The Apostles of Liberty urging a Swiss prisoner to accept the New Constitution, if he wished to save his life, he shrugged his shoulders ; on which the murderers presented their firelocks at him ; " Fire," said he, and was shot. At the same period twenty peasants, armed with clubs, had barricaded themselves at a farm ; they were summoned to surrender, but refused : the French set fire to the house and burnt those descendants of *William Tell*.

So odious and vile is French *Liberty*, that the very convicts would have nothing to do with it. The insurgents of Vaudois having set at liberty and honoured with their fraternity ten malefactors employed in the public works at Yverdun, they refused to be indebted to rebels for such a blessing: their irons being taken off, they went and surrendered themselves at Berne.

On the 3d of March, *Schawenbourg* caused it to be declared to the Council of Berne, "that being informed on good authority that the greater part of the persons of both sexes confined in the prisons were detained there only on account of their attachment to France, he required that they should be set at liberty; in default of which the Magistrates should undergo the treatment which those *friends of Liberty* had received."

The French General's letter was read to the convicts, to the number of 200, leaving it at their option either to go and join him, or return to their old habitations, or join in defending the State: they, one and all, accepted the last, and most of them were killed at Frauenbrun.

The Bernese youth had generally devoted themselves; many of those who, till the month of February, had persisted in their partiality for France, atoned for their errors by a conduct equally firm and loyal.

No exact computation of the respective losses having been returned or known, the

blood spilt from the 2d to the 6th of March was estimated only by supposition. I believe it is not going too far to reckon the number of the killed and wounded on both sides at 6000. Berne had to regret about 100 prisoners, and more than 60 officers, mortally wounded or killed upon the spot.

C H A P. IX. AND LAST.

Consequences of the Surrender of Berne.—Excesses and Crimes of the French.—Fate of the Rest of Switzerland.—Conclusion.

THAT one nation should arrogate the right of overturning the laws of another, and of forcing it to receive new institutions; that a victorious empire, abusing its power and its success, should turn its arms against happy, feeble, and peaceable neighbours; that the depraved leaders of that empire should secure the triumph of so infamous a tyranny by means still more infamous; are scandals from which, though rare, the sad annals of the human race are not totally exempt:—but, that the original notions of justice, of liberty, and of natural right, should have been subverted by men so impudent as to set up for their restorers; that they should go with the caduceus and olive-branch in their hands to assassi-

nate confiding and deluded nations; that Parisian oppressors, fed on blood and plunder, should go and teach democracy to the Shepherds of Schweitz, the code of nature to the Mountaineers of the Alps, and public morals to tribes whom even the virtues of Paris would strike pale with horror; that the lies of hypocrisy should be succeeded by savage atrociousness; and that with the smile of friendship they should strike their victims with the calamities of war, the abuses of conquest, and the abominations of despotism;—are novelties so monstrous as must fix the opinion of ages upon the character and principles of the French Government.

Such is its contempt for its Citizens, for their Representatives, for that air-puffed Constitution, which takes all forms under the hands of tyranny, that the Directory, in attacking Switzerland, did not condescend even to consult the Legislative Body to legalize the outrage.

This silence might have induced us to presume that those desolators would confine themselves to menacing demonstrations in order to constrain the Swiss to adopt their system; and that, when they saw the general resistance, the repugnance of the people to those revolutionary whims, and the impossibility of exciting insurrections, they would be ashamed to proceed farther, and to force, by the invasion of an army, what

they were not able to obtain by menaces or by seduction.

Vain conjecture ! The Directory is not one of those powers that stick at simple forms. The subjugation and pillage of Switzerland were decreed in their Councils : the reduction of three Cantons was to be the prelude to the usurpation of Helvetia entire, and a place conquered in five days was to be treated like a town taken by storm after the siege of a year.

I will not pollute the public eye with the horrid recital of the outrages which marked the path of the French. I draw a veil over the fate of the innkeeper's wife at the village of Lohne, nearly crucified by a party of soldiers, and expiring under their brutality ; over the fate of two Patrician young ladies of Fribourg, found dead and violated on the highway ; over the fate of a hundred women abandoned to such infamous treatment, and whose lifeless bodies were thrown unburied into the woods. Shall I say, that during the expedition against the smaller Cantons, one of those monsters, not being able to overcome the resistance of a woman big with child, plunged his sabre into her heart ; that the relations of this unfortunate young woman having run up at her cries, and cut the wrists of her ravisher, their merited vengeance was proclaimed by the French General as an inexpiable crime, and as an encouragement to the fury of his soldiers ?

A competition of plunder is established between the civil and military agents of the Directory and their satellites. From the plundered Canton of Soleure, the troops of *Schawenbourg*, on the 5th, spread themselves over the country of the Canton of Berne: above thirty villages in the space of several leagues were given up to pillage; country-houses, town-houses, farms, cottages, stripped from top to bottom, and what furniture could not be carried off, broken to pieces. The mansion of *Jeggistorf*, inhabited by an old woman of sixty, having been pillaged by some hussars, they left her her library, linen, and pictures, but with these the officers who came up afterwards loaded their waggons.

In virtue of the respect promised for *persons* and *property*, all who were found in the streets by the enemy on their entering were stripped: money, watches, jewels, even handkerchiefs and hats, made up this first booty; the cellars broken open, victuals seized, and thefts committed in many houses, were only a prelude. In the night between the 5th and 6th the troops fall on the adjacent country, three hundred houses are broken open and plundered; the lower town of *Fribourg* and the neighbouring places meet the same fate.

Witnesses to the pillage committed by their soldiers, the Generals, who were preparing to outdo it, neither chastise, nor re-

strain. *Brune*, it is true, establishes a market for protection: he opens a tariff where the impunity of the theft is atoned for by suffering the inhabitants to ransom their property: here we have the General himself robbing his brothers in arms. The French Government boasted in their Journals that these violences had been punished: yes, punished by mock denunciations in printed papers with which the plunderers wrapt up booty: three or four of them were shot for their want of address; thousands escaped unnoticed. The remission in ransacking the country was owing to the despair of the inhabitants, and to the numbers of the russians exterminated by them, and not to the *virtues* of the Directory and their General.”*

We owe it to truth to observe, that most of those horrors in the beginning were the work of the army of the Rhine: the divisions drawn from that of Italy preserved much more discipline: many of the officers detested this hateful war, strove to alleviate the lot of the victims, and did not conceal either their contempt or their execration for the Government who condemned them to execute their iniquities. Numbers of the soldiers, particularly the troopers, dis-

* A person of my acquaintance who was robbed at Lausanne by the army of *Deliverers*, complained to the Commander, who expressed his astonishment at seeing him with a coat to his back: “If,” said he, “the theft had been the work of my soldiers, they would have stript you to your shirt.”

covered the same sentiments : Switzerland will no more forget their integrity than the crimes of their leaders.*

The General and the Directorial Commissaries very soon caused these first ravages to be forgotten. *Brune*, repeating the scenes of Milan, Modena, and Bologna, without acknowledgments, inventories, or minutes, seizes at Berne the State treasure, and swallows up all the public banks and also the private ones of the Patrician families : at a second motion, he makes away with the magazines, public funds, and the arsenal :— immense collections of corn, wine, and ammunition, 300 pieces of artillery, arms for 40,000 men, the cannon-foundery, the commonest utensils, vanish under the hands of that robber : it is the same at Fribourg and at Soleure, every thing is drained. The plunderers discover the funds transferred to Oberland in the month of February : instantly *Brune* threatens that country with an invasion, meanwhile suborns the mountaineers, promises them independence, and

* Such was the ignorance of this army, that on their arrival at Lausanne, both officers and soldiers asked the Jacobins of the place, *where the palace of their Prince was, that they might go and teach him reason.* Perhaps not a single man out of the 46,000 could be found, who had the slightest notion of the Constitutions of Switzerland : it was the same in the Revolutionary Councils and Academies of Paris. Will it be believed, that at that time it appeared in the Journals in pay of the Directory, that the *Catholic Religion supported the Government of Berne* ; that *God and the Saints were armed at the arsenal* ; that it ordered *processions and invocations to the Virgin Mary*, and that *the priests granted full indulgence for the murder of a Frenchman* ? See *l'Ami des Loix, le Redacteur, le Journal des Hommes libres, &c.*

wrests from their credulity that gold, those provisions, those cannon that would have better insured their liberty than the promises of a forgerer. This people excepted, all the inhabitants of the towns and of the country are disarmed.

On receiving these *trophies*, the Directory rewarded achievements so valorous. Promoted to the chief command of the army of Italy, *Brune*, fattened by the blood and spoils of Helvetia, removes to a fresh theatre of rapine. Other Will-o'-the-wisps succeed him, under the title of Executive Commissioners; organize theft, and methodize regularly its enormity, form, and division. The scourge of requisitions widens the bleeding wounds of the victims: "*It is your part to feed,*" says Carrier the commissioner, —who? "your assassins and plunderers: —pay for your slavery.—I must have all the horses and cattle of your country; I must drain your granaries and take all your harvests: the sweat of your brows, your savings, your very existence, and that of your families, belong to your executioners."

Such was the literal meaning of the proclamation of the 29th of March with which this new Lucifer installed himself at Berne. Eleven Bernese Magistrates were torn from their houses and sent to the citadel of Strasburg: five from Soleure, taken up by *Schawenbourg*, had preceded them in their exile and captivity. These *hostages*,

whose whole fortunes were in the hands of the ravishers, were made responsible for the general solvency of the tributes.

Le Carlier took the consumption of the country for his own use, laid the first contribution of money on Fribourg at 100,000 crowns, and one on Berne at 800,000 livres.

To acquit his conscience, and legalize his exactions, this dispenser of distributive justice decided that the old Government alone should bear the burden of the tributes. If they had taken but a crown from them, that crown would have been a theft. By what right did three hundred Bernese proprietors owe their patrimony to the leeches of the French Republic? Nay, had their fortunes been as illegitimate as they were pure; had they been raised from the sweat of the people, was it to foreign robbers that they were to account and make restitution? Why did not *Carlier the Just* assemble the subjects of the Bernese Aristocracy and indemnify them for the injuries they had suffered?*

Wretched subterfuge of avarice and iniquity! It was upon property, and not upon aristocracy, that the Directory made war: it is property which is the object pursued

Will it be believed that this *Carlier*, whom the Directory raised immediately to the Ministry, said to the inhabitants of Helvetia, in the prospectus of his requisitions, *Be constitutionally happy: I call for your confidence, I want it to serve you. Depend upon the justice and the generosity of the French Government, which considers all free men as the children of the same country. Then, Let us assemble congresses, let us reason, let us listen to learned men upon the charms of peace, and upon the BONHOMMIE of the five Directors of Paris?*

by their dogmas, their artifices, their soldiers, and their commissioners ; it is for being the foundation of every offence, that the friends of the Revolution have defended robbery, by soliciting unremittingly the indulgence of the laws in its favour : when the impure touch of *philosophy* polluted the cardinal law of property, the system of the social world was shaken, and crime sprung forward to invade the earth.

French rapacity had yet overran but half of these domains. Lucerne, Zurich, the Democratic Cantons, Valois, the Grisons, Turgovia, the State of St. Gall, remained to be invaded and plundered. By what title did the Directory contaminate them with the presence of their soldiers, and oppress them with their Revenue Officers and inquisitors? It was against the Canton of Berne, and not against Switzerland, that they had declared war : the Canton of Berne alone was the object of their calumnies, their reproaches, and pretences : the confederates of that Republic had seen her assailed, had seen her fall, without assisting her with a single cartridge ; they had all sacrificed their laws to the despotism of France : in short, in the infinite variety of their Governments was there not one to be found that did not deserve to be fulminated, without pity, like the aristocracies of Berne, Fribourg, and Soleure?

No consideration of justice could arrest

the course of invasion and plunder. Notwithstanding the submission of Zurich, notwithstanding the word of General *Schawenbourg*, that that Canton should neither be burdened with troops nor exactions, the head-quarters of the French army was established at Zurich itself: as far as the Lake of Constance all the country is overflowed with soldiers, preceptors, and plunderers. Some peasants of the Canton of Lucerne call for the re-establishment of the old system, and oppose the new: this resistance is overcome, blood is spilt, and Lucerne becomes French property.

At the other end of Switzerland, Valais follows the example of Lucerne, and wishes to defend its religion, laws, and independence. Bands of murderers make their way into these unfortunate vallies with fire and sword, burn and plunder Sion, murder the inhabitants, and pillage the worn-out Mountaineers: amidst flames, carnage, and groans, the Directorial President, *Mangourit*, publishes a homily upon *liberty, equality, and virtue*.* His colleague, General *Lorge*, also takes up the pen dipt in blood, and calls these Republicans *wretched, guilty, sacrilegious, infamous*, for having dared to fight for their country, their property, their rights, and religion.

* Gracious God! Virtue! This fellow, when Consul at Charleston, in 1794, called publickly on the Americans not to carry provisions to, but starve, such of the West-Indies as had protected themselves.—See the public papers of the times: the *Boston Centinel* published a reply to it.

Fiscal tyranny treads the heels of the tyranny of arms. *Le Carlier*, thought too humane, resigns the sceptre of depredation to the commissioners *Roubiere* and *Rapinat*: the latter, chief of the expedition, charged with secret instructions, and chosen by *Rewbell* his relation, opens a new hell. He seals and carries off the treasures and public chests at Lucerne, Zurich, and Valais: the magazines are confiscated, a shower of requisition falls on the ruins of Switzerland; contributions are renewed: 750,000 livres are levied on six Abbeys; 6 million upon the Patricians of Berne; 7 million on Zurich, Lucerne, Fribourg, and Soleure:—*Totila* and *Alaric* were merciful when compared to these modern depredators, educated in the Lyceums of Paris.

Clamours arose, but they were the clamours of impotence. How, and with what, was this profusion of rapine to be discharged? Even the phantom of Helvetic Legislature, which was speechifying at Arau upon *the enfranchisement of Helvetia*, was affected, interceded, and remonstrated: its dastardly silence was accused by the public fury, and then it was broken: but *Rapinat*, inflexible, pursues the plunder, and *Scharwenbourg* and his soldiers enforce it. In concert they silence complaint and despair: Switzerland crushed, falls under a system of terror: imprisonment, confiscation, inquisition, and the scaffold await murmurs and the show of

resistance. It is no longer safe to consult, to speak, or even to listen. *Scharwenbourg* prohibits the free Helvetians to go from one Canton into another, or to leave their country without a passport signed by him ; and the liberty of the press is forbidden.

The Democratic Cantons preserved their independence amidst the general slavery. They were not to be shaken from their resolution not to sacrifice their liberty to that political hypothesis which the Directory were forcing upon the Swiss, under the title of *Helvetic Constitution*. Exasperated that the shepherds of the High Alps disowned their empire and their wisdom, they ordered *Scharwenbourg* to go and revive in those mountains the tyrants overthrown by the arrow of TELL.

It was a strange sight to see a Republic of six years standing, whose edicts, public places, and coins bore the image of *Liberty*, wresting from poor, ignorant, and happy Democracies the rights of retaining their institutions.

Heaven did not this time permit the triumph of iniquity. Headed by two distinguished officers, M. *de Paravicini* and M. *de Reding*, these intrepid Mountaineers braved the insolence, the commands, and the cohorts of *Scharwenbourg*. In a war of three weeks they killed 3000 of his men, and forced him to retreat, by a treaty in which he engaged not to enter the smaller Cantons.

There, was fixed a barrier to the deluge of extortions, outrages, and despotism, which ravaged Switzerland : *there*, no French regimental had polluted the looks of innocence and of liberty.

This disgraceful campaign of *Scharwenbourg's* was nevertheless marked with the usual debauchery and ferocity of his army. To console himself for his failure, he went in person to profane, pillage, and demolish the Abbey of *Notre Dame des Hermites*, or *d'Enfelden*, on the confines of the Canton of Schwitz.

An oppression so unbridled alienated even the most immoral Jacobins. The Helvetic Directory, the Councils of Arau, lost all credit ; nor could the future designs of the French Government be accomplished without restoring that affrighted authority to which it had given birth. To preserve, therefore, the profits of tyranny without running a risk of its punishment, it disavowed the conduct of *Rapinat*, and recalled him.

This Vizier, weary of the remonstrances and opposition of the Assembly of Arau, had just deposed two of the Helvetic Directors, threatened to do the same by the Representatives, and issued a torrent of ordinances, amounting to a proscription of all Switzerland. No one is so simple as to suppose that this Agent exceeded his instructions : the Directory of Paris had foreseen

the effect of them, on which their subsequent projects depended.

Hypocrisy now comes to the relief of exhausted barbarism. They are affected with the calamities of Switzerland; its oppressor is superseded, and they promise to mitigate rigours become insupportable. Credulity immediately catches at this hope: the Helvetic Regents, pupils of the Directory, embrace the opportunity of an accommodation: they detested *Rapinat* less as a tyrant than as their rival: and the announce of his retreat facilitates the return of servile ambition.

Ochs and *La Harpe*, twice excluded from the Executive Body of Arau, are, by an order from *Rewbell*, again appointed, installed, and harangued. The reconciliation is attested by feasts, compliments, and oaths; and they engage with the French Government to ratify, without delay, the treaty of alliance which is to unite the two nations.

This catastrophe must produce the conclusion of the tragedy. After removing by voluntary or forced resignations those of the Helvetic administration, whose indocility was in their way; after securing the executive power by introducing into it the two authors of the Revolution, the French Directory continue *Rapinat* in his employments; then say to this dishonoured, thunderstruck, and deluded nation: "My justice will repair no iniquity: I retain the

fruit of the infamous oppression into which I have plunged you ; but my clemency will suspend the course of it. Be the slave of my interests ; espouse my passions ; suffer your evils without murmuring ; kiss the chains I present you, and I will alleviate their pressure."

Such is the language in which the Directors and Representatives of Arau, satisfied with having recovered a shadow of authority, paid the homage of their gratitude : applying narcotics to the wounds of their countrymen, they labour to lull the pangs of them, without resenting or avenging them. Already their servility creeps after the revolutionary motions of their masters ; already they announce that they will perpetuate the slavery and calamities of their Country, rather than see the ancient Government restored. Though sometimes great villains, under the glare of great talents, have entrapped admiration ; it is with disgust the eye looks upon the caricature of a National Representation elected in spite of the Nation ; of subaltern Revolutionists commanded by other Revolutionists, uniting incapacity with pretension, and the abjectness of impotence to the pride of a four days' power ; the organs of slavish will, getting their college eloquence by heart from the *Moniteur*, and resting their dignity on cringing to the *Great Nation*.

The new Constitution imposed upon

Switzerland by the French Directory has made no part of our inquiry. Had it been dictated by *Numa*, it would still have been an object of dread, brought as it was with drawn swords, encompassed by murderers, extortioners, suborners, and executioners. Surely it required little genius to transmit by the post from Paris to Arau, a Directory, a Council of Elders, and a Council of Youth. This institution, blasted by its source and by the crimes of its founders, tends to a very speedy overthrow of morals and of nature in Switzerland : it awakens in it all the passions, multiplies ferments, and introduces a double conception of powers, the inevitable clashing of which will lead to oligarchy or to anarchy : it will soon make the impoverished States acquainted with the burden of public taxes.

Ever misled by the notions of uniformity and of symmetry, little minds have admired this conversion of twenty Republics into a single Government. Some day or other we shall be called upon to discuss the grounds of this admiration : at present two words shall suffice.

This political reduction places the fate of Switzerland into the hands of a few men : to the federal Body succeeds a single Power, uniting the force of the whole League, and adapted to give it an impulse, independent of the will and of the interests of each of its members. Add to this system a situa-

tion in which the State so governed finds itself awed by 40,000 foreign soldiers, and under the influence of a great Power ruling its Councils, and you will have the secret of the Helvetic Revolution, of its final object, and of the decrees of the Directory.

They have just chained Switzerland by an alliance offensive and defensive, which gives them the command of all her resources, of all the strength of the Country. The Representatives, the Magistrates of this devoted people, betraying the maxims of their fathers, the traditions of their sages, the chief interests of the nation, have dared to consummate this fatal treaty. *An offensive alliance!* This is the first time these words were ever heard in Switzerland. At the sight of a folly so criminal, what would the venerable *Nicholas de Flue* have said, who, in 1481, when he was reconciling at Stanz the disputes of the Cantons, made use of these memorable words: *Beware of foreign influence, which will involve you, in spite of yourselves, in the wars and projects of your neighbours.*

Having secured their wealth for themselves, the Directory command the Swiss to make them ramparts of their plundered vallies; and, covered with their blood, require that of their children! And is there to be found an Helvetian so brutalized as to follow the standard of his oppressors, as to sell them the ashes of the martyrs butch-

ered by their satellites, as to aid their impious ambition in the further destruction of the human race ?

Helvetic Legislators ! melancholy sport of your own passions, and of usurpers more subtle than yourselves, recal to mind the answer of *Phocion* to the Demagogue *Leosthenes*, who had just plunged Athens into a disastrous war. *What good did you do the Republic when you had the command ?* said the arrogant Demagogue to the virtuous *Phocion*.—*The good I did is not less*, replied that great Patriot ; *for, during the time I commanded, the Athenians were buried in the graves of their fathers.*

Let us hope that Switzerland will unanimously repel that fraternity of Cain with Abel : that she will leave all the shame to her pusillanimous Deputies. Torn, impoverished, enfeebled by the Revolution, she would lose all hope of recovering her prosperity, were she to precipitate herself into the gulf which the Directory open before her : her population, her agriculture, her public economy, her freedom, inseparable from tranquillity, would be swallowed up in it : she would go back four centuries. Yes, doubtless, war is necessary for her : * but it is to the hearts of her tyrants that she should direct her blows. Let her arm herself, not with the blade of Sicilian vespers, but with the first weapon she can find

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* Si le Ciel la permet, c'est pour la liberté.

fit to fight with. Every enemy of the Directory is a friend to Switzerland ; every nation oppressed by the French is her ally. Let her turn her hopes towards that Monarch, whose inexhaustible armies will second her efforts, without endangering her independence. There rest her safety and her glory.

But if her simplicity be misled by treacherous delusions ; if she can console herself under her yoke, her ruin, and disgrace ; if her destroyers succeed in reconciling her to her sufferings, in corrupting her instincts, in ranging her among those flocks of effeminate beings, to whom every thing is indifferent except the loss of ease ; let her be sure beforehand that that ease will slip from her : there is no sleeping upon the pillow of a Revolution, of which an eternal perturbation is the principle, and all the furious passions of mankind the result !

See every where to what, patience, submission, sacrifices, and rapid and forced Constitutions lead. It was the rich who constrained the poor to the bloody slavery under which you groan ; ask them what has been the reward of their docility : ask those Revolutionists, equally bruised by the scourge they invited, what that *popular enfranchisement* promised by your *Deliverers* is worth !

Besides, where is the security that your Provinces, or some parts of them, will not,

fooner or later, be added to that Hell, the limits of which the Directory are every day extending? Do they acknowledge on earth any other right than their convenience? Who tells you that they will not resort to *that of Nature* to remove to the Alps that barrier which for a moment they affect to place at Mount Jura? Are not physical laws under the command of their Lawyers? But I understand you: *the treaties! the promises! the oaths!* The treaties! What became of that which guaranteed the safeguard of neutrality to your two allies, Bienne and Mulhausen?

The *treaties!* Look at Geneva. Did not the French Government protest twenty times in the face of God and man, that they would ever respect the liberty of that unfortunate Republic? Did not their agent *Adet* tell them the following lie? "I assure you that the French people will never do any thing against your independence. The word I now pass to you, the French Republic will keep: tyrants alone are privileged to perjure themselves." And while the Convention were adding the standard of Geneva as a trophy to the vaulted roof of their hall; while their Resident, *Resnier*, bringing, in token of alliance, a similar pledge of fraternity, was crying out, "Let the tri-coloured flag be the seal of the striking proof that the French Nation is the *most professed partisan of your independence;*" the

credulous Genevese referred, as you do, to the *treaties and the promises*.

Notwithstanding, however, you have seen that Republic, which was your friend, tormented with vexations, suspended, its communications cut off; you have seen it blocked up, starved, invaded in the midst of peace, and the mournful debates of the community terminated by the intrusion of the soldiers of the Directory.*

No, so many examples will not be lost; the imposture is worn out by its successes. The French Republic may make accomplices, but in future will make no more dupes than friends. That tyrannized nations should subscribe to a worse slavery, may be conceived; but a free people is accountable for bearing any. Switzerland must either dash down her monuments and tear her history, or she must be answerable to us to avenge her disgrace.

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* I refer those who wish to convince themselves of the character of the Directory, to a pamphlet, as true as it is interesting, written by my countryman, M. Chauvet, entitled, *Conduite du Gouvernement François envers la République de Genève*.

APPENDIX,

Containing Vouchers and Papers referred
to in the foregoing Essay.



*To the High and Mighty Lords, the Avoyer and Privy
Council of the City and Republic of Berne.*

FRANCKFORT, Nov. 22d, 1797.

High and Mighty Lords,

ALTHOUGH your Lordships gave me no notification of the demand which the Executive Directory of France have made to you, relative to my mission, I could not be ignorant of what was notorious throughout Switzerland, and I thought it my duty to communicate it to my Court, informing it at the same time of the insulting manner in which it was transmitted to you.

The King sees in all this proceeding, which attacks equally the rights of nations and your ancient dignity and independence, the treacherous intention of breaking the ties which have at all times attached him to your States, and the project formed to sap the very foundations of the Helvetic union.

Persuaded of this truth, his Majesty, who, by sending his Minister to Switzerland, meant to give a proof of his good-will and friendship towards your States, will not permit the continuation of his residence in your dominions to afford a pretext to the hostile projects of a neighbour, whose ambition re-

spects neither justice nor the rights of sovereignty, and who are only endeavouring to extend to your happy countries, a destructive system, from which, by the assistance of Divine Providence, you have been able, hitherto, to protect yourselves. The King has in consequence ordered his whole Embassy to withdraw from the Helvetic territory without delay.

In communicating this resolution to your Lordships, the King orders me to assure you that it is dictated only by his extreme solicitude for the preservation of your tranquillity, and that your Lordships may depend upon the continuation of the good-will and friendship which have always directed his Majesty in his intercourse with your State.

I seize eagerly this opportunity, High and Mighty Lords, to express my own full sense of the gracious manner in which I have been treated by your Lordships, and my regret at being no longer the organ of my Sovereign's sentiments to you.

Permit me, High and Mighty Lords, to express to your Government in particular my sincere acknowledgments for all the goodness you have heaped upon me during my residence in your City.

Wherever I may be, I shall never cease praying for your prosperity, and that, by the assistance of the Almighty, your nation may continue to enjoy, under your wise Government, the inestimable advantages you have hitherto been able to give it.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

WM. WICKHAM.

(B)

PEACE AND SAFETY TO ALL HIS FRIENDS.

MENGAUD, *Commissary of the Executive Directory, to the Inhabitants of all the Countries not yet occupied by the French Republic, Dependencies upon the old Bishopric of Basle, on the left Bank of the Rhine.*

CITIZENS !

THE union of a part of the old Principality of Porrentruy, equally decided the incorporation of your Countries with the French Republic.

This proceeding of France is that of a free people; substituted to the rights of the Government, against Nature, which weighs you down. And inasmuch as the exercise of those rights, become ours, did not take place sooner, by purging them of all that is incompatible with the dignity of man, it does not follow, that we have forgotten that you are still in chains. We come to break them.

Happier than your fathers, whose blood flowed in the wars which laid the foundation of the different kinds of Government in Switzerland, and which have only bequeathed you a burdensome and degrading existence, you are at length going to enjoy the blessings of Providence, who only created men to make them members of one and the same family.

You knew nothing but tithes, *corvées*, &c. You had only priests, nobles, and privileged persons : your trades, your industry, your arts, in short your very subsistence, all bore the stamp of the sacerdotal despotism so dexterously combined with a no less odious tyranny. Now, you are men : Liberty and Equality will no longer permit among you any other distinction than that of merit, talents, and virtue. Called all indiscriminately to the helm of the Society, in the support and safety of which you are all

equally interested, your subsistence will in future be secure, the granaries of the French Republic being the property of all its children. Your trade, encouraged within, protected without, will no longer be shackled. Industry, the arts, agriculture, will receive encouragements to be expected only from a Nation, victorious, free, powerful, and generous, enlightened on the nature of rights, and on the manner of exercising them.

Learn to appreciate these advantages, and merit them by turning a deaf ear to the interested and treacherous insinuations of the evil-minded and of fools, who endeavour to sink the value of them in your eyes, and to mislead you.

We come among you as friends. We are your brothers. Do not be afraid of any ill treatment. Properties and persons shall be protected, as much as the enemies of Liberty shall be made to suffer. The most exact and strict discipline shall be observed by the Warriors, who have never had, nor ever will have, any other enemies than those of Liberty. Such are the orders of the Executive Directory.

MENGAUD,

Commissioner of the Executive Directory.

(C)

The Deputies of the Bernese People to their Fellow-Citizens.

WHEN, some days ago, we were called by your meetings to sit in the midst of the Government, you justly hoped that great advantages would result from it, and that the closer union of the Citizens of the State would be the true means of protecting us successfully against the dangers that were every moment increasing, and more and more threatening our coun-

try. Your hope will not be disappointed, dear Fellow-Citizens ; and though in so short a time it has not yet been possible for us to remove your fears upon the arrangements without, we have nevertheless taken a great step towards the triumph which we should desire ; that is, by having increased our strength by a union most wise and most necessary. As a thousand little streams running by themselves, and which by a happy inclination fall into one channel, forms a powerful and majestic river, so are we going to become a striking and formidable mass, whose courage and assurance of a good cause cannot fail to obtain success.

Man is designed to improve his state : it is one of the great blessings attached to his nature. All the human dispositions should make a progress according to circumstances ; but the most important of all is the union of men under laws and Government, which we call the State.

The edifice of our Constitution, existing for ages, its very antiquity would be a respectable testimony in its favour, even if we had not a still more perfect proof in the general prosperity which the Nation has enjoyed to the present time under its influence. However, as nothing which is the work of man can be perfect, our Government, perhaps, has need of some reforms ; and the fathers of the country have been long occupied in the means of effecting them without shocks and without agitations ; for nothing is more dangerous than to touch, though ever so slightly, the constitutional laws of a State. It seemed therefore that the present moment was not proper for this great work, and surely it might have produced much more valuable advantages had it been possible to delay it till happier times. Nevertheless, confess it, dear Fellow-Citizens, a strong desire of innovation has appeared on your part. This wish was that of a small number, it is true ; but it was imprudent, if it came from yourselves ; it was incompatible with that noble pride which ought to animate a free people, if it was the result of a foreign impulse.

It was to satisfy your views, that, as soon as we had taken our places in the Assembly of the Government, alterations were proposed to us which appeared useful to the general good of the country and suitable to circumstances. We have supported those propositions with firmness, as you entrusted to us the care of co-operating as we should judge necessary for the safety of the country.

If it be true that our Constitution was not exempt from abuses, which human weakness renders almost inseparable from Governments, how many have already disappeared through the wisdom and prudence of the Administration? Did we not possess, in the fullest extent it could have, the security of persons and property, the two most precious advantages of civil society? Can the Administration be accused of a single deviation from justice? Can the members of our Government be reproached with the least inclination that could look like corruption? Could the treasures of the State be administered with stricter responsibility, with greater economy? And if the fertility of a parched and rocky soil, if the prosperity of a loyal nation, that has preserved the ancient purity of its manners, be the most certain proofs of the goodness of its government, is it not yourselves who render this glorious testimony to the Supreme Power? Woe be to you, if ever you can forget it!

And furthermore, the rights which in future you will enjoy, have not been demanded, but freely granted: for the wish of the majority had not yet appeared among you. It remains for you, dear Fellow-Citizens, to render yourselves worthy of these blessings. If liberty be the greatest blessing to the people, the basis which secures it ought to be so much the more sacred; there is nothing great or sublime which may not be yet effected under its auspices; but a good constitution can only be the effect of profound discernment, and the result of tranquil labour, directed by wisdom and experience. If, on the contrary, it be hurried by the heat of the passions, it is

stified in its birth. The elevation of such an edifice is the work of time, by which alone every thing is matured. To begin by demolishing what gives us a sure shelter, would be to expose ourselves naked to the violence of a tempest. When a lowering storm gathers on the horizon, the pilot who has a sense of his duty stands more stoutly at the helm, but still keeps his sails spread, the sooner to bring his ship to an anchor.

The welfare of your country, dear Brothers, your own, and that of your children, is in your hands. Your wishes are now satisfied. All that could be granted consistent with the general good has been granted. Whoever at this time should dare to require more, could only do so from selfish views, and not for his country ; his object could only be to destroy, not to preserve it. We have but a choice between two things: either an entire obedience to the law and Supreme Power, which alone can save our threatened State ; or the overflow of all the wild and ungovernable passions, the ruin of a flourishing country, the annihilation of public prosperity, the havoc occasioned by the corruption of morals ; in short, a view of the most frightful disasters and misfortunes for us and our generation. Who should dare to doubt our resolution? Yes ! dear Fellow-Citizens, you have honoured us with your confidence ; you have imposed upon us the task, exceedingly grateful to our hearts, of supporting your dearest rights and interests. It is for you then, it is in your name, it is from the bottom of your hearts that we swear to save the country ; and you cannot belie us.

If this act of union, which we this day announce to you, were not enough to disarm all our enemies and annihilate their designs ; if there be one yet remaining, who would impose laws upon us, violate the sanctuary of our liberty, and in fine render useless the wise reforms we have been making in our constitution ; then the country will call her children ; they will assemble, they will press round her ; and if

you should have the misfortune to be forced to fight, the thorough knowledge you have of your cause will support your courage, while it insures your success. The solemn assurance of your rights will be the standard round which you will form an impenetrable wall ; it will be the banner you will carry against a powerful enemy, who thenceforth will no longer be to be feared by you : we will place ourselves beside you, and in the first ranks ; it will wave bleeding in the air, but we will never desert it ; we will bring it back with us, or never more return ourselves ; and if pushed to extremity, we are resolved to die, but in such a manner as to recal to the remembrance of posterity the glorious name of our ancestors. We will bury ourselves under the ruins of our country, rather than bow our heads under an ignominious yoke. We may cease to be ; *but our honour must never be annihilated.*

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BERNE, February 5th, 1798.

